

ANNA ST. IVES:

A NOVEL.

AND A LIVES

NOT

ANNA ST. IVES:

A NOVEL.

BY

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

VOLUME II.

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ANNA ST. IVER

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ANNA ST. IVES:

A NOVEL.

LETTER XXVI.

SIR ARTHUR ST. IVES

TO

ABIMELECH HENLEY.

Paris, Hotel d'Espagne, Rue Guenegaude,

Fauxbourg St. Germain.

YOU cannot imagine, honest Aby, the surprise I am in. Is this their famous France? Is this the finest country in the whole world? Why, Aby, from Boulogne to Paris, at least from Montreuil, I am

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certain I did not see a single hedge! All one dead flat; with an eternal row of trees, without beginning, middle or end. I sincerely believe, Aby, I shall never love a straight row of trees again. And the wearisome right lined road, that you never lose sight of; not for a moment, Aby! No lucky turning. No intervening hill.

Oh that I were but the Grand Monarch! What improvements would I make! What a scope for invention, Aby! A kingdom! A revenue of four hundred millions of livres, and a standing army of three hundred thousand men! All which, if the king were a wise man, it is very evident, Abimelech, he might employ in improvements; and heaven knows there is a want of them. What are their petty corvées, by which these straight roads have been patched up, and their everlasting elms planted? I would assemble all my vassals — [Your son Frank, Aby, has given me much information concerning the present governments of Europe, and the origin of manors, fiefs, and lordships. I can assure
you

you he is a very deep young man ; though I could wish he were not quite so peremptory and positive ; and has informed me of some things which I never heard of before, though I am twice his age. But he seems to have them so fast at his finger's ends that I suppose they must be true. I had often heard of entails, and mortmain, and lands, held in fee or fief, I don't know which, and all that you know, Abimelech. One's deeds and one's lawyers tell one something, blindly of these matters ; but I never knew how it had all happened. He told me that—Egad I forget what he told me. But I know he made it all out very clear. Still I must say he is cursed positive.]—However, Aby, as I was saying, I would assemble all my vassals, all my great lords and fief holders, and they should assemble their vassals, and all hands should be set to work : some to plan, others to plant ; some to grub, some to dig, some to hoe, and some to sow. The whole country should soon be a garden ! Tell me, Aby, is not the project a grand

one *? What a dispatch of work! What a change of nature! I am ravished with the thought!

As for my ideas of improvement to be picked up here, Abimelech, they must not be expected. I shall never forget the fameness of the scene! So unlike the riches of Wenbourne-Hill! Sir Alexander would have a country open enough here, at least. He would not complain of being shut in. The wind may blow from what point it pleases, and you have it on all sides. Except the road-side elms I mentioned, and now and then a coppice, which places they tell me are planted for the preservation of the game, I should have supposed there had not been a tree in the country; had I not been told that there were many large forests, to the right, and the left, out of sight. For my part I don't know where they have hidden them, and so must take their word for the fact.

* The plan is in reality much grander than the good knight suspected; if embraced at the will of a nation, instead of at the will of an individual.

"Tis

'Tis true indeed that we travelled a part of the way in the dark.

I was mentioning the game, Aby. The game laws here are excellently put in execution. Hares are as plenty as rabbits in a warren, partridges as tame as our dove-house pigeons, and pheasants that seem as if they would come and feed out of your hand. For no scoundrel poacher dare molest them. If he did, I am not certain whether the lord of the manor could not hang him up instantly without judge or jury.

Though Frank tells me they have no juries here: which by the bye is odd enough; and as he says I suppose it is a great shame. For, as he put the cause to me, how should I like to have my estate seized on, by some insolent prince or duke? For you know, I being a baronet in my own right, Aby, no one less in rank would dare infringe upon me. Well! How should I like to have this duke, or this prince, seize upon my estate; and,

instead of having my right tried by a special jury of my peers, to have the cause decided by him who can get the prettiest woman to plead for him, and who will pay her and his judges the best? For such Frank assures me is the mode here! Now really all this is very bad; very bad indeed, and as he says wants reforming.

But as for the game laws, as I was saying, Aby, they are excellently enforced; and your poor rascals here are kept in very proper subjection. They are held to the grindstone, as I may say. And so they ought to be, Aby. For I have often heard you say, what is a man but what he is worth? Which in certain respects is very true. A gentleman of family and fortune, why he is a gentleman; and no insolent beggar ought to dare to look him in the face, without his permission. But you, Aby, had always a very great sense of propriety, in these respects. And you have found your advantage in it; as indeed you ought. It is a pity, considering what a learned young man you have
made

made your son, that you did not teach him a little of your good sense in this particular. He is too full of contradiction: too confident by half.

Let me have a long and full and whole account of what you are doing, Aby. Tell me precisely how forward your work is, and the exact spot where you are when each letter comes away. I know I need not caution you to keep those idle fellows the day labourers, to it. I never knew any man who worked them better. And yet, Aby, it is surprising the sums that they have cost me; but you are a very careful honest fellow; and they have done wonders, under my planning and your inspection.

I do not wish that the moment I receive a letter it should be known to every lacquey; especially here; where it seems to be one entire city of babblers. The people appear to have nothing to do but to talk. In the house, in the street, in the fields, breakfast, dinner, and supper, walking, sitting, or standing, they are never

B 4

silent.

silent. Nay egad I doubt whether they do not talk in their sleep! So do you direct to me at the Café Conti—However I had better write the direction for you at full length, for fear of a mistake. And be sure you take care of your spelling, Aby, or I don't know what may happen. For I am told that many of these French people are devilish illiterate, and I am sure they are devilish cunning. Snap! They answer before they hear you! And, what is odd enough, their answers are sometimes as pat as if they knew your meaning. Indeed I have often thought it strange that your low poor people should be so acute, and have so much common sense. But do you direct your letters thus—

A Monsieur Monsieur le Chevalier de St. Ives, Baronet Anglois, au Café Conti, vis-a-vis le Pont Neuf, Quai Conti, à Paris.

And so, Abimelech, I remain,

A. ST. IVES.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

*Paris, Hôtel d'Espagne, Rue Guenegauds,
Fauxbourg St. Germain.*

THE black forebodings of my mind, Oliver, are fulfilled! I have been struck! The phantom I dreaded has appeared, has flashed upon me, and all the evils which I prophesied, and more than all, are collecting to overwhelm me; are rushing to my ruin!

This brother of Louisa! Nothing surely was ever so unaccountable! The very same whom I prevented from fighting, in the *Champs Elysées*! Ay, he! This identical

B 5.

Clifton,

Clifton, for Clifton it was, has again appeared; has been here, is here, is never hence. His aspect was petrifying! He came upon me this second time in the strangest, the most insolent manner imaginable; just as I had sent away my last letter to thee; when I was sitting the guardian of a treasure, which my fond false reveries were at that moment flattering me might one day be mine! Starting at the sight of me! Nothing kind, nothing conciliating in his address; it was all imperious demand. Who was I? By what right did I deny admission to the young lady's woman, to inform her he was come to pay her his respects? He!—Having a letter from Sir Arthur, inviting him thither!—Were such orders to be countermanded by me? Again and again, who was I?—Oliver, he is a haughty youth; violent, headstrong, and arrogant! Believe me he will be found so.

What do I mean? Why do I dread him? How! The slave of fear? Why is my heart so inclined to think ill of him? Do I seek to depreciate? She has mentioned

tioned him several times; has expected, with a kind of eagerness, he would resemble her Louisa; has hoped he and I should be friends. "Did not I hope the same?" Oliver, she has tortured me! All benevolence as she is, she has put me on the rack!

I must not yield thus to passion: it is criminal. I have too much indulged the flattering dreams of desire. Yet what to do?—How to act?—Must I tamely quit the field the moment an adversary appears! turn recreant to myself, and coward-like give up my claims, without daring to say such and such they are? No. Justice is due as much to myself as to any other. If he be truly deserving of preference, why let him be preferred. I will rejoice.—Yes, Oliver, *will*.—He who is the slave of passion, is unworthy a place in the noble mind of Anna.

But this man is not my superior: I feel, Oliver, he is not; and it becomes me to assert my rights. Nay, his pride acts as a provocative—Oliver, I perceive how

wrong this is; but I will not blot out the line. Let it remain as a memento. He that would correct his failings must be willing to detect them.

The anxiety of my mind is excessive; and the pain which a conviction of the weakness and error that this anxiety occasions, renders it still more insupportable. I must take myself to task; ay and severely. I must enquire into the wrong and the right, and reason must be absolute. Tell me thy thoughts, plainly and honestly; be sure thou dost; for I sometimes suspect thee of too much kindness, of partiality to thy friend. Chastise the derelictions of my heart, whenever thou perceivest them; or I myself shall hereafter become thy accuser. I am dissatisfied, Oliver: what surer token can there be that I am wrong? I weary thee—Prithee forgive, but do not forget to aid me.

F. HENLEY.

P. S. He—[I mean Louisa's brother; for I think only of one he and one she,

at

at present.] He has not yet taken any notice of our strange first meeting; and thou mayst imagine, Oliver, if he think fit to be silent, I shall not speak. Not that it can be supposed he holds duelling to be disgraceful. I have enquired if any rencounter had taken place; for I was very apprehensive that the champions would have their tilting-match another time. However, as I can hear of no such accident, and as Mr. Clifton is here continually, I hope I have been instrumental in preventing such absurd guilt. The follies of men are scarcely comprehensible! And what am I? Dare I think myself wise? Oliver, my passions are in arms; the contest is violent; I call on thee to examine and to aid the cause of truth.

LET

LETTER XXVIII.

 COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

I HAVE found it, Fairfax! The pearl of pearls! The inestimable jewel! The unique! The world contains but one!—And what!—A woman! The woman of whom I told you!—Anna St. Ives!—You have seen the Venus de Medicis?—Pshaw!—Stone! Inanimate marble! But she!—The very sight of her is the height of luxury! The pure blood is seen to circulate! Transparent is the complexion which it illuminates!—And for symmetry, for motion, for grace, sculptor, painter, nor poet, ever yet imagined such! Desire languishes

languishes to behold her! The passions are all in arms, and the mere enjoyment of her presence is superior to all that her sex beside can give!

Do not suppose me in my altitudes: all I can say, all you can imagine, are far short of the reality.

Then how unlike is her candour to the petty arts, the shallow cunning of her sex! Her heart is as open as her countenance; her thoughts flow, fearless, to her lips. Original ideas, expressed in words so select, phrases so happy, as to astonish and delight; a brilliancy and a strength of fancy that disdain limitation, and wit rapid and fatal as lightning to all opposition; these and a thousand other undefinable excellencies are hers.

I love her—Love?——I adore her! Ay——Be not surprised——Even to madness and marriage!——No matter for what I have beforetime said, or what I have thought, my mind is changed. I have discovered perfection which I did not imagine could exist. I renounce my
former

former opinions; which applied to the sex in general were orthodox, but to her were blasphemy.

I would not be too sudden; I have not yet made any direct proposal. But could I exist and forbear giving intimations? No. And how were they received? Why with all that unaffected frankness which did not pretend to misunderstand but to meet them, to cherish hope, and to give a prospect of bliss which mortal man can never merit.

She is all benevolence! Nay she is too much so. There is that youngster here; that upstart; he who bolted upon us and mouthed his Pindarics in the Elysian Fields; the surly groom of the chamber. This fellow has insinuated himself into her favour, and the benignity of her soul induces her to treat him with as much respect as if he were a gentleman.

The youth has some parts, some ideas: at least he has plenty of words. But his arrogance is insufferable. He does not scruple to interfere in the discourse,
either

either with me, Sir Arthur, or the angelic Anna! Nay, sets up for a reformer; and pretends to an insolent superiority of understanding and wisdom. Yet he was never so long from home before in his life; has seen nothing, but has read a few books, and has been permitted to converse with this all intelligent deity.

I cannot deny but that the pedagogue sometimes surprises me, with the novelty of his opinions; but they are extravagant. I have condescended, oftener than became me, to shew how full of hyperbole and paradox they were. Still he as constantly maintained them, with a kind of congruity that astonished me, and even rendered many of them plausible.

But, exclusive of his obstinacy, the rude, pot companion loquacity of the fellow is highly offensive. He has no sense of inferiority. He stands as erect, and speaks with as little embarrassment, and as loudly as the best of us: nay, boldly asserts that neither riches, rank, nor birth, have any claim. I have offered to buy him

him a beard, if he would but turn heathen philosopher. I have several times indeed bestowed no small portion of ridicule upon him; but in vain. His retorts are always ready; and his intrepidity, in this kind of impertinence, is unexampled.

From some anecdotes which are told of him, I find he does not want personal courage; but he has no claim to chastisement from a gentleman. Petty insults he disregards; and has several times put me almost beyond the power of forbearance, by his cool and cutting replies. His oratory is always ready; cut, dry, and fit for use; and damned insolent oratory it frequently is.

The absurdity of his tenets can only be equalled by the effrontery with which they are maintained. Among the most ridiculous of what he calls first principles, is that of the equality of mankind. He is one of your levellers! Marry! His superior! Who is he? On what proud eminence can he be found? On some Welsh mountain, or the pike of Teneriffe? Certainly

tainly not in any of the nether regions! What! Was not he the afs that brayed to Balaam? And is he not now Mufti to the mules? He will if he please! And if he please he will let it alone! Dispute his prerogative who dare! He derives from Adam; what time the world was all hail fellow well met! The savage, the wild man o'the woods is his true liberty boy; and the orang outang his first cousin. A Lord is a merry andrew, a Duke a jack pudding, and a King a tom fool: his name is man!

Then, as to property, 'tis a tragic farce; 'tis his fovereign pleasure to eat nectarines, grow them who will. Another Alexander, he; the world is all his own! Ay, and he will govern it as he best knows how! He will legislate, dictate, dogmatize; for who fo infallible? What! Cannot Goliah crack a walnut?

As for arguments, it is but ask and have: a peck at a bidding, and a good double handful over. I own I thought I knew something; but no, I must to my
horn

horn book. Then, for a simile, it is sacrilege; and must be kicked out of the high court of logic! Sarcasm too is an ignoramus, and cannot solve a problem: Wit a pert puppy, who can only flash and bounce. The heavy walls of wisdom are not to be battered down by such pop-guns and pellets. He will waste you wind enough to set up twenty millers, in proving an apple is not an egg-shell; and that *homo* is greek for a goose. Dun Scotus was a school boy to him. I confess, he has more than once dum-founded me by his subtleties.—Pshaw!—It is a mortal murder of words and time to bestow them on him.

My sister is in correspondence with my new divinity. I thought proper to bestow a few gentle lashes on her, for a letter which she wrote to me, and which I mentioned in my first from Paris, insinuating her own superiority, and giving me to understand how fortunate it would be for the world should I but prove as consummate a paragon as herself. She
richly

richly deserved it, and yet I now with I had forborne; for, if she have her sex's love of vengeance in her, she may injure me in the tenderest part. Never was woman so devoted to woman as Anna St. Ives is to Louisa. I should suspect any other of her sex of extravagant affectation; but her it is impossible to suspect: her manner is so peculiarly her own: and it comes with such unsought for energy, that there is no resisting conviction.

I have two or three times been inclined to write and ask Louisa's pardon. But, no; that pride forbids. She dare not openly profess herself my enemy. She may insinuate, and countermine; but I have a tolerably strong dependance on my own power over Anna. She is not blind. She is the first to feel and to acknowledge superior merit; and I think I have no reason to fear repulse from any woman, whose hand I can bring myself to ask.

One of Anna's greatest perfections, with me, is the ready esteem which she entertained for me, and her not being insensible to those qualities which I flatter myself

myself I possess. Never yet did woman treat me with affected disdain, who did not at last repent of her coquetry.

'Tis true that Anna has sometimes piqued me, by appearing to value me more for my sister's sake even than for my own. I have been ready to say dissimulation was inseparable from woman. And yet her manner is as unlike hypocrisy as possible. I never yet could brook scorn, or neglect. I know no sensation more delicious than that of inflicting punishment for insult or for injury; 'tis in our nature.

That youngster of whom I have prated so much, his name is Frank Henley, denies this, and says that what the world calls nature is habit. He added, with some degree of sarcasm as I thought, that it was as natural, or in his sense as habitual, for some men to pardon, and to seek the good even of those by whom they were wronged, as it was for others to resent an endeavour to revenge. But, as I have said, he continually makes pretensions

tensions to an offensive superiority. You may think I do not fail to humble the youth, whenever opportunity offers. But no! Humble him, indeed! Shew him boiling ice! Stew a whale in an oyster-shell! Make mount Caucasus into a bag pudding! But do not imagine he may be moved! The legitimate son of Cato's eldest bastard, he! A petrified Possidonius, in high preservation!

There is another thing which astonishes me more than all I have mentioned. Curse me, Fairfax, if I do not believe that [God confound the fellow!] he has the impudence to be in love with Anna St. Ives! Nay that he braves me, defies me, and, in the insufferable frothy fermentation of his vanity, persuades himself that he looks down upon me!

I must finish, for I cannot think of his intolerable insolence with common patience; and I know not what right I have to tease you, concerning my paltry disputes with a plebeian pedant, and my
still

still more paltry jealousies. But let him beware! If he really have the arrogance to place himself in my way, I will presently trample him into his original non-entity. I only forbear because he has had the cunning to make himself so great a favourite.

This must be horribly stupid stuff to you, Fairfax: therefore pay me in my own coin; be as dull as you sometimes know how, and bid me complain if I dare.

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

LOUISA CLIFTON
TO
COKE CLIFTON.

Rose-Bank.

I WRITE, dear brother, in answer to your last, that I may not by any neglect of mine contribute to the mistake in which you are at present. Your letter shews that you suppose your sister to be vain, presumptuous, and rude; and, such being your feelings, I am far from blaming you for having expressed them.

Still, brother, I must be sincere, and I would by no means have it understood that I think you have chosen the best manner of expressing them; for it is not the manner which, if I have such faults, would be most

likely to produce reformation. But your intention has been to humble me: and, desiring to be sarcastic, you have not failed in producing your intended effect. I am sincerely glad of it: had you shewn that desire without the power, I should have been as sincerely sorry. But where there is mind there is the material from which every thing is to be hoped.

I suppose I shall again incur chastisement, for rising thus as you call it to the sublime. But I will write my thoughts without fear, and I hope will patiently listen should they deserve reproach. If I have sinned, it is in most fervently wishing to find my brother one of the brightest and the best of men; and I have received more pleasure from the powers he has displayed, in reproofing me, than I could have done by any dull expression of kindness; in which, though there might have been words, there would have been neither feeling, sentiment, nor soul.

The concluding sentence of your letter warns me not to defame you with my friend.

friend. I must speak without disguise, brother. You feel that, had you received such a letter, revenge would have been the first emotion of your mind. I hope its duration would have been short. I will most readily and warnly repeat all the good of my brother that I know: but I will neither conceal what ought to be said, nor say what I do not know. I take it for granted that he would not have me guilty of duplicity.

Adieu, dear brother; and believe me to be affectionately your

L. CLIFTON,

LETTER XXX.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

*Paris, Hotel d'Espagne, Rue Guenegande,
Fauxbourg St. Germain.*

HOW severe, Oliver, are the lessons of truth! But to learn them from her lips, and to be excited to the practice of them by her example, are blessings which to enjoy and not to profit by would shew a degenerate heart.

I have just risen from a conversation which has made a deep impression on my mind. It was during breakfast. I know not whether reflecting on it will appease, or increase, the sensations which the behaviour of this brother of Louisa hourly exacerbates,

cerbates. But I will calm that irritability which would dwell on him, and nothing else, that I may repeat what has just happened.

The interesting part of what passed began by Mr. Clifton's affirming, with Pope, that men had and would have, to the end of time, each a ruling passion. This I denied, if by ruling passion were meant the indulgence of any irregular appetite, or the fostering of any erroneous system. I was asked, with a sneer, for my recipe to subdue the passions; if it were not too long to be remembered. I replied it was equally brief and efficacious. It was the force of reason; or, if the word should please better, of truth.

And in what year of the world was the discovery of truth to be made?

In that very year when, instead of being persecuted for speaking their thoughts, the free discussion of every opinion, true or false, should not only be permitted, but receive encouragement and applause.

As usual, the appeal was made to

Anna : and, as usual, her decision was in my favour. Nothing, said she, is more fatal, to the progress of virtue, than the supposition that error is invincible. Had I persuaded myself I never could have learned French, Italian, or music, why learn them I never could. For how can that be finished which is never begun? But, though all the world were to laugh at me, I should laugh at all the world, were it to tell me it is more difficult to prevent the beginning, growth, and excess of any passion, than it is to learn to play excellently on the piano forte.

Is that really your opinion, madam? said Clifton.

It is.

Do you include all the passions?

All.

What ! The passion of love ?

Yes. Love is as certainly to be conquered as any of them ; and there is no mistake which has done more mischief than that of supposing it irresistible.—
Young people, and we poor girls in particular;

cular, having once been thoroughly persuaded of the truth of such an axiom, think it in vain to struggle, where there are no hopes of victory. We are conquered not because we are weak, but because we are cowards. We seem to be convinced that we have fallen in love by enchantment, and are under the absolute dominion of a necromancer. It is truly the dwarf leading the giant captive. Is it not—[Oliver! She fixed her eyes upon me, as she spoke!]
Is it not, Frank?

I was confounded. I paused for a moment. A deep and heavy sigh involuntarily burst from me. I endeavoured to be firm, but I stammered out—Madam—it is.

I am convinced he is jealous of me.—Nay he fears me; though he scorns me too much to think so meanly of himself. Yet he fears me. And what is worse, Oliver, I fear him! I blush for my own debility. But let me not endeavour to conceal my weakness: No, it must be encountered, and cured. His quick and audacious,

dacious eye was searching me, while I struggled to think, and rid myself of confusion; and he discovered more than gave him pleasure.—She continued.

I know of no prejudice more pernicious to the moral conduct of youth than that of this unconquerable passion of love. Any and all of our passions are unconquerable, whenever we shall be weak enough to think them so. Does not the gamester plead the unconquerableness of his passion? The drunkard, the man of anger, the revengeful, the envious, the covetous, the jealous, have they not all the same plea? With the selfish and the feeble, passion succeeds to passion as different habits give birth to each, and the last passion proves more unconquerable than its predecessor. How frequently do we see people in the very fever of this unconquerable passion of love, which disappears for the rest of their lives, after a few weeks possession of the object whom they had so passionately loved! How often do they as passionately hate; while the violence of their hatred
and

and of their love, is perhaps equally guilty!

Sir Arthur I observed was happy to join in this new doctrine; which however is true, Oliver. I am not certain that he too had not his apprehensions, concerning me: at least his approbation of the principle was ardent.

This was not all. After a short silence, she added, and again fixed her eyes on me—Next to the task of subduing our own passions, I know none more noble than that of aiding to subdue the passions of others. To restore a languishing body is held to be a precious art; but to give health to the mind, to restore declining genius to its true rank, is an art infinitely more inestimable.

She rose, and I withdrew; her words vibrating in my ear, where they vibrate still. Perceivest thou not their import?—Oliver, she has formed a project fatal to my hopes! Nay, I could almost fear, fatal to herself! Yet what, who can harm her? Does the savage, the monster exist, that could look
c 5
upon

upon her and do her injury? No! She is safe! She is immaculate! Beaming in beauty, supreme in virtue, the resplendent ægis of truth shields her from attain!

Yes, Oliver, her answers were to him; but the intent, the soul of them was directed to me. It was a warning spirit, that cried, beware of indulging an unjustifiable passion! Awake! at the call of virtue, and obey! Behold here a sickly mind, and aid me in its recovery!—To me her language was pointed clear, and incapable of other interpretation.

But is there not peril in her plan? Recover a mind so perverted? Strong, I own, nay uncommon in its powers; for such the mind of Clifton is: but its strength is its disease.

And is it so certain that for me to love her is error, is weakness, is vice? No. Or, if it be, I have not yet discovered why.— Oliver, she shall hear me! Let her shew me my mistake, if mistaken I be, and I will desist: but justice demands it, and she shall hear me.

We

We are going to remove, at his repeated instances, to the hotel where he resides.—He leads Sir Arthur as he pleases ; but it grieved me to see her yield so readily. Now that I have discovered her intentions, I no longer wonder. Omnipotent as the power of truth and virtue is, I yet cannot approve the design. The enterprises of virtue itself may have their romance—I know not—This to me at least is fatal—Could I—? I must conclude!—I lose her?—For ever!—For ever;—I must conclude—

F. HENLEY.

LETTER XXXI.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

THE assiduity of Clifton, my dear Louisa, is so great that we already seem to be acquaintance of seven years standing. This is evidently his intention. His temper is eager, impatient of delay, quick in resolving, and, if I do not mistake, sometimes precipitate. But his intellectual powers are of a very high order. His wit is keen, his invention strong, his language flowing and elegant, and his ideas and figures remarkable, sometimes for their humour, and at others for their splendour. His prejudices are many of them deep;

deep; nor are they few; but he speaks them frankly, defends them boldly, and courts rather than shuns discussion. What then may not be hoped from a mind like his? Ought such a mind to be neglected? No!—No!—Eternally no!—I have already given a strong hint of this to Frank.

I am persuaded that, since you saw him, he is greatly improved in person. The regularity of his features, his florid complexion, tall stature, and the facility and grace of all his motions, are with him no common advantages.

He has attached himself exceedingly to us, and has induced Sir Arthur to take apartments in the *Hotel de l'Université*, where he resides himself, and where the accommodations are much better, the situation more agreeable, and the rooms more spacious.

A little incident happened, when we removed, which was characteristic of the manners of the people, and drew forth a pleasing trait of the acuteness of Clifton, and of his turn of thinking.

One

One of the men who helped us with our luggage, after being paid according to agreement, asked, as is very customary with these people, for *quelque chose pour boire* ; which Sir Arthur, not being very expert in the French idiom, understood literally. He accordingly ordered a bottle of the light common wine, and being thirsty poured some into a tumbler, and drank himself first, then poured out some more, and offered the porter.

The man took the glass as Sir Arthur held it out to him ; and, with some surprise and evident sense of insult in his countenance, said to Sir Arthur—*à moi, monsieur ?* To which Sir Arthur, perfectly at a loss to comprehend his meaning, made no answer ; and the man, without tasting the liquor, set the glass down on a bench in the yard.

Clifton, well acquainted with the manners of the people, and knowing the man imagined Sir Arthur meant to insult him, by giving him the same glass out of which he had drunken, with great alacrity

cridy took it up the moment the man had set it down, and said—*Non, mon ami, c'est à moi*—and drank off the wine. He then called for another tumbler, and filling it gave it to the man.

The French are a people of active and lively feelings; and the poor fellow, after receiving the glass from Clifton, took up the other empty tumbler, poured the wine back into it, said in his own language forgive me, sir; I see I am in the wrong; and immediately drank out of the tumbler which he had before refused.

Each country you perceive, Louisa, has its own ideas of delicacy. The French think it very strange to see two people drink out of the same vessel. Not however that I suppose every porter in Paris would refuse wine, if offered, for the same reason. Neither would they all with the same sensibility be so ready to retract.

The good humour as well as the good sense of Clifton's reproof pleased me highly; and we must all acknowledge him
our

our superior, in the art of easily conforming to the customs of foreigners, and in readily pardoning even their absurdities. For foreigners, Louisa, have their absurdities, as well as ourselves.

But I have not yet done. I have another anecdote to relate of Clifton, from which I augur still more.

I had observed our Thomas in conversation with a man, who from his dress and talking to Thomas, I knew must be an Englishman; and the care which it becomes me to take, that such well-meaning but simple people should not be deceived, led me to enquire who he was. Thomas began to stammer; not with guilt, but with a desire of telling a story, which he knew not how to tell so well as he wished. At last we understood from him it was a young English lad, who had neither money, meat, nor work, and who was in danger of starving, because he could find no means of returning to his own country. Poor Thomas finding himself among a kind of heathens, as he calls
the

the French, pitied his case very sincerely, and had supplied him with food for some days, promising that he would soon take an opportunity of speaking to me, whom he is pleased to call the best young lady in the world; and I assure you, Louisa, I am proud of his good word.

Your brother heard this account, and immediately said——[For indeed I wished to know what his feelings were, and therefore did not offer to interrupt him.]

“ Desire him to come up. Let me question him. If he be really what he says, he ought to be relieved: but he is very likely some idle fellow, who being English makes a trade of watching for English families, and living upon this tale.” So far said I to myself, Clifton, all is right. I therefore let him proceed. The lad came up, for he was not twenty, and your brother began his interrogations.

You are an English lad, you say? . II

Yes, sir.

Where do you come from?

Wolverhampton.

What

What is your trade?

A buckle plater.

And did you serve out your apprenticeship?

No.

How so?

My master and I quarrelled, he struck me, I beat him, and was obliged to run away.

Where did you run to?

I went to London. I have an aunt there, a poor woman, who chairs for gentlefolks, and I went to her.

How came you here?

She got me a place, with a young gentleman who was going on his travels. I had been among horses before I was bound 'prentice, and he hired me as his groom.

But how came you to leave him?

He is a very passionate gentleman. He has got a French footman, who stands and shrugs, and lets him give him thumps, and kicks; and one morning, because one boot was brighter than t'other, he

was

was going to horsewhip me. So I told him to keep his hands off, or I would knock him down.

Why you are quite a fighting fellow.

No, sir; I never fought with any body in my life, if they did not first meddle with me.

So you quarrelled with your master, beat him, ran away from your apprenticeship, got a place, came into a foreign country, and then, because your master did not happen to please you, threatened to knock him down!

The poor fellow was quite confounded, and I was half out of breath from an apprehension that Clifton had taken the wrong side of the question. But I was soon relieved—This tale is too artless to be false, said he, turning to me.—

You cannot conceive, Louisa, the infinite pleasure which these few words gave me. I still continued silent, and watching, not the lad, but your brother.

So you never meddle with any body who does not meddle with you?

No, sir. I would scorn it.

But

But you will not be horfewhipped?

No, fir, I won't; ftarve or not ftarve.

I need not ask you if you are honeft, fober, and induftrious; for I know you will fay you are.

Why fhould I not, fir?

You have nobody to give you a character, have you?

My Master is ftill in Paris; but to be fure he will give me a bad one.

Can you tell me his addrefs—where he lives?

I can't tell it in French, but here it is.

Can you write and read?

Yes, fir.

And how long have you been out of place?

About feven weeks.

Why did not you return to England, when you received your wages?

I had no money. I owed a fellow fervant a guinea and a half, which I had borrowed to buy fhirts and ftockings.

And thofe you have made away with?

Not all. I was obliged to take fome of them to Mount Pity.

Mont

Mont Piété, you mean*.

Belike yes, fir.

Well, here's something for you, for the present; and come to me to-morrow morning.

The lad went away, with more in his countenance than he knew how to put into speech; and I asked Clifton what he meant by desiring him to come again. I intend, madam, said he, to make some inquiries of his master; and if they please me, to hire him; for I want a servant, and if I am not deceived he will make a good one.

Think, Louisa, whether I were not pleased with this proof of discernment.— By this accident, I learned more of Clifton's character in ten minutes than perhaps I might have done in ten months. He saw, for I wished him to see, that he had acted exactly as I could have desired.

* The general receptacle for pledges. Among other monopolies and trades, government in France used to be the common pawnbroker.

He

He appears indeed to be a favourite with servants, which certainly is no bad omen. He is Laura's delight. He is a free gentleman, a generous gentleman, [I suppose he gives her money] a merry gentleman, and has the handsomest person, the finest eye, and the best manner of dressing his hair she ever beheld?—She quite overflows in his praise.

In a few days we are to go to the country seat of the Marquis of Villebrun, where we intend to stay about a fortnight. Your brother has introduced us to all his friends, among whom is the marquis; and, as we are intimate with our ambassador, we have more invitations than we can accept, and acquaintance than we can cultivate. Frank is to go with us.

And now, Louisa, with anxiety I own, my mind is far from satisfied. I have not thought sufficiently to convince myself, yet act as though I had. It is little less than open war between your brother and Frank. The supposition of a duty, too serious to be trifled with, has induced me to favour rather

ther than repulse the too eager advances of Clifton; though this supposed duty has been but half examined.

The desire to retrieve my mind cannot but be right; yet the mode may be wrong.

At this moment my heart bitterly reproaches me, for not proceeding on more certain principles. The merit of Frank is great, almost beyond the power of expression. I need not tell my Louisa which way affection, were it encouraged, would incline: but I will not be its slave. Nor can I reproach myself for erring on that side; but for acting, in resistance to inclination, with too little reserve. No arguments I believe can shew me that I have a right to sport with the feelings of my father, and my friends; though those feelings are founded in prejudice. But my inquiries shall be more minute; and my resolves will then be more permanent and self-complacent.

Adieu, my best and dearest friend.—
Write often: reprove me for all that I do amiss.—Would my mind were more accordant

cordant with itself! But I will take it roundly to task.

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER XXXII.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

THIS brief memorandum of my actual existence, dear Fairfax, will be delivered to you by the Chevalier de Villeroi; a worthy gentleman, to whom I have given letters to my friends, and who will meet you at Turin.

I have not a moment to waste; therefore can only say that I am laying close siege; that my lines of circumvallation do not proceed

ceed quite so rapidly as my desires ; but that I have just blown up the main bastion ; or, in other words, have prevailed on Sir Arthur to send this hornet, this Frank Henley, back to England. The fellow's aspiring insolence is not to be endured.— His merit is said to be uncommon. 'Tis certain he strains after the sublime ; and in fact is too deep a thinker, nay I suspect too deep a plotter, not to be dangerous. Adieu.

C. CLIFTON.

I am in a rage ! Curse the fellow ! He has countermined me ; blown up my works ! I might easily have foreseen it, had I not been a stupid booby. I could beat my thick scull against the wall ! I have neither time nor patience to tell you what I mean ; except that here he is, and here he will remain, in my despite.

LETTER XXXIII.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

It is as I told thee, Oliver. He fears me. He treats me, as he thinks, with the neglect and contempt due to an unqualified intruder : but he mistakes his own motives, and acts with insidious jealousy ; nay descends to artifice. His alarmed spirit never rests ; he is ever on the watch, lest at entering a room, descending a staircase, stepping into her carriage, or on any other occasion, I should touch her hand. He has endeavoured to exclude me from all
their

their parties; and, though often successfully, has several times been foiled.

But his greatest disappointment was this very morning. Sir Arthur sent for me, last night, to inform me I must return to Wenbourne-Hill, with some necessary orders, which he did not choose to trust to the usual mode of conveyance. I immediately suspected, and I think I did not do him injustice, that my rival was the contriver of this sudden necessity of my return.

I received Sir Arthur's orders, but was determined immediately to acquaint Anna.

Clifton was present. She was surprised; and, I doubt not, had the same suspicions as myself; for, after telling me I must not think of going, she obliged Clifton himself to be the intercessor, with Sir Arthur, that I should stay. His reluctance, feigned assent, and chagrin were visible.

Her words and manner to me were kind; nay I could almost think they were somewhat more. She seemed to feel the injustice aimed at me; and to feel it with

as much resentment as a spirit so benignant, could know.

What!——Can he not be satisfied with half excluding me from her society: with endeavouring to sink me as low in her estimation as in his own; and with exercising all that arrogance which he supposes becoming the character of a gentleman?

Oliver, I am determined in my plan: my appeal shall be to her justice. If it prove to be ill-founded, why then I must acquiesce. I am angry at my own delay, at my own want of courage; but I shall find a time, and that quickly. At least, if condemned I must be, I will be heard; but equity I think is on my side—Yes—I will be heard.

F. HENLEY.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIV.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

AID me if thou canst, Oliver, to think, or rather to unravel my own entangled thoughts. Do not suffer me to continue in a state of delusion, if thou perceivest it to be such. Be explicit; tell me if thou dost but so much as forbode: for at moments I myself despond; though at others I am wafted to the heaven of heavens, to certainty and bliss unutterable. If I deceive myself?—Well! And if I do, what is to follow?—Rashness?—Cowardice?—

What! Basely abandon duty, virtue, and energy?—No!

Looks, words, appearances, daily events are so contradictory, that the warfare of hope and fear increases, and becomes violent, almost to distraction! Clifton is openly countenanced by Sir Arthur, treated kindly by her, and is incessant in every kind of assiduity. His qualities are neither mean, insignificant, nor common.—No: They are brilliant, and rare. With a person as near perfection as his mind will permit it to be, a knowledge of languages, a taste for the fine arts, much bravery, high notions of honour, a more than common share of wit, keen and ungovernable feelings, and impatience of contradiction, and an obstinacy in error, he is a compound of jarring elements, that augur tempests and peril. Vain, haughty, and self-willed, his family, his fortune, his accomplishments and himself are the pictures that fascinate his eye. It is attracted, for a moment, by the superior powers of another; but all his passions and propensities forbode that he

he is not to be held, even by that line of adamant.

And is she to be dazzled then by this glare? Can her attention be caught by person, attracted by wit? And does she not shrink from that haughty pride which so continually turns to contemplate itself; from those passions which are so eager to be gratified; and from those mistakes which it will be soon almost impossible to eradicate? Even were I to lose her, must I see her thus devoted?—The thought is—I cannot tell what! Too painful for any word short of extravagance.

Impressed by feelings like these, the other day I sat down and threw a few ideas into verse. The mind, furcharged with passion, is eager by every means to disburthen itself. It is always prompt to hope that the expression of it's feelings, if any way adequate, cannot but produce the effect it wishes; and I wrote the following song, or love-elegy, or what thou wilt.

Rash hope avaunt ! Be still my fluttering heart ;
 Nor breathe a sorrow, nor a sigh impart ;
 Appeas each bursting throb, each pang reprove ;
 To suffer dare—But do not dare to love !

Down, down, these swelling thoughts ! Nor dream that
 worth

Can pass the haughty bounds of wealth and birth,
 Yes, kindred feelings, truth, and virtue prove :
 Yes, dare deserve---But do not dare to love !

To noble tasks and dang'rous heights aspire ;
 Bid all the great and good thy wishes fire,
 The mighty dead thy rival efforts move,
 And dare to die---But do not dare to love !

Thou knowest her supreme excellence
 in music ; the taste, feeling, and expres-
 sion with which she plays : and the en-
 chanting sweetness and energy with which
 she sings. Having written my verses, I
 took them, when she was busied elsewhere,
 to the piano-forte ; and made some unsuc-
 cessful attempts to please myself with an
 air to them. Sir Arthur came in, and I
 left my stanzas on the desk of the instru-
 ment ; very inadvertently I assure thee,
 though

though I was afterwards far from sorry that they had been forgotten.

I have frequently indulged myself in sitting in an antichamber, to listen to her playing and singing. I have thought that she is most impassioned when alone, and perhaps all musicians are so. The next day, happening to listen in the manner I have mentioned, I heard her singing an air which was new to me, and remarked that she once or twice stopped, to consider and make alterations.

I listened again and found she had been setting my verses!

By my soul, Oliver, I have no conception of rapture superior to what I experienced at that moment! She had collected all her feelings, all her invention, had composed a most beautiful air, and sung it with an effect that must have been heard to be supposed possible. The force with which she uttered every thought to the climax of daring; and the compassion which she infused into the conclusion—"But do not dare to love"—produced

ced the most affecting contrast I ever heard.

This indeed was heaven, Oliver! But a heaven that ominously vanished, at the entrance of Clifton. I followed him, and I saw her shut the book, and wipe the tear from her eye. Her flow of spirits is unfailing, but the tone of her mind was raised too high suddenly to sink into trifling. She looked at me two or three times. I know not for my part what aspect I wore: but I could observe that the haughty Clifton felt the gaiety of his heart in some sort disturbed, and was not pleased to catch me listening, with such mute attention, to the ravishing music she had made.

Once again prithee tell me, Oliver, what am I to think? It was impossible she should have sung as she did, had not the ideas affected her more than I could have hoped, nay as much as they did myself. She knew the writing. Why did she sigh?
Why

Why feel indignant? Why express every sentiment that had passed through my mind with increasing force?—What could she think?—Did she not approve?—She sung as if she admired!—The world shall not persuade me that her looks were not the true expressions of her heart; and she looked—! Recollect her, and the temper of mind she was in, and imagine how!—Remember—*She could love me if I would let her!*

I was displeased with the verses when I had written them: they were very inadequate to what I wished. I discovered in some of the lines a barren repetition of the preceding thought, and meant to have corrected them. But I would not now alter a word for worlds! She has deigned to set and sing them; and what was before but of little worth is now inestimable.

Yet am I far from satisfied with myself. My present state of mind is disgraceful; for it cannot but be disgraceful to be kept in doubt by my own cowardice. And if I am deceiving myself—Can it be possi-

ble, Oliver?—But if I am, my present error is indeed alarming. The difficulty of retreating momentarily increases, and every step in advance will be miles in return.

Clifton will suffer no impediment from the cowardice of which I complain; for I much mistake if he has been accustomed to refusal; or if he can scarcely think, when he deigns to sue, denial possible.

I find myself every day determining to put an end to this suspense, and every day delaying. The impulse however is too great to be long resisted; and my excuse to myself continually is that I have not yet found the proper moment.

If, Oliver, this history of my heart be troublesome to thee, it is thy duty to tell me so. But indeed thou tellest me the contrary; and I know not why at this instant I should do thee the injustice to doubt thy sincerity. Forgive me. It is a friendly fear, and not intended to do thee wrong. But I wish thee to judge of me and my actions; and even to let thy father judge,

if

if thou shouldst at any time hesitate, and fear I am committing error. Do this, and continue thy usual kindness in communicating thy thoughts.

F. HENLEY.

P. S. The day after to-morrow, we are to set off for the Chateau de Villebrun; on a party of pleasure, as it is called. Thus men run from place to place, without knowing of what they are in search. They feel vacuity; a want of something to make them happy; but what that something is they have not yet discovered.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

I FEAR, my dear Louisa, I am at present hurried forward a little too fast to act with all the caution which I could wish. My mind is not coherent, not at peace with itself. Ideas rush in multitudes, and more than half obscure my understanding.

I find that, since we left Wenbourne-Hill, Frank has grown upon my thoughts very strangely. Indeed till then I was but partially acquainted with his true character, the energy of which is very uncommon. But, though his virtues are become more conspicuous, the impediments

ments that forbid any thought of union are not lessened.

My chief difficulty is, I do not yet know how to give full effect to my arguments, so as to produce such conviction as he shall be unable to resist. Let me do but this, and I have no doubt of his perfect acquiescence, and resignation. But, should I fail, the warfare of the passions will be prolonged; and, for a time, a youth whose worth is above my praise rendered unhappy. A sense of injustice, committed by the person of whom, perhaps, he thought too highly to suppose it possible that either error or passion should render her so culpable, may prey upon his peace, and destroy the felicity of one to whom reason and recollection tell me I cannot wish too much good.

I am convinced I have been guilty of another mistake. I have on various occasions been desirous of expressing approbation, mingled with esteem and friendship. He has extorted it from me. He has obliged me to feel thus. And why, have

I con-

I constantly asked myself, should I repress or conceal sensations that are the dues of merit? No: they ought not to have been repressed, or concealed, but they ought to have been rendered intelligible, incapable of misconstruction, and not liable to a meaning which they were never intended to convey. For, if ever they were more than I suppose, I have indeed been guilty.

Yes, my Louisa, let me discharge my conscience. Let no accusation of deceit rest with me. I can endure any thing but self-reproach. I avow, therefore, Frank Henley is, in my estimation, the most deserving man I have ever known. A man that I could love infinitely. A man whose virtues I do and must ever love. A man in whose company my heart assures me I could have enjoyed years of happiness. If the casuists in such cases should tell me this is what they mean by love, why then I am in love.

But if the being able, without a murmur, nay cheerfully, to marry another, or see him properly married, if the possession of the power and the resolution to do what is right, and if an unshaken will to exert this

this power prove the contrary, why then I am not in love.

When I may, without trespassing on any duty, and with the full approbation of my own heart, yield up its entire affections, the man to whom they shall be devoted shall then find how much I can love.

My passions must be, ought to be, and therefore shall be, under my control; and, being conscious of the purity of my own intentions, I have never thought that the emanations of mind ought to be shackled by the dread of their being misinterpreted. It is not only cowardly, but in my opinion pernicious.

Yet, with respect to Frank, I fear this principle has led me into an error. Among other escapes of this kind, there is one which has lately befallen me, and for which I doubt I am reprehensible.

Frank has written a song, in which his feelings and situation are very strongly expressed. He left it on my music desk, by accident; for his character is too open, too determined, to submit to artifice.

The

The words pleased me, I may say affected me, so very much that I was tempted to endeavour to adapt an air to them; which, when it was written, I several times repeated, and accompanied myself on the piano-forte. Your brother came in just as I had ended; and, from a hint which he purposely gave, I suspect that Frank had been listening in the anti-chamber.

The behaviour of Frank afterward confirmed the supposition. He followed your brother, and sat down while we conversed. His whole soul seemed absorbed; but not, as I have sometimes seen it, in melancholy. Satisfaction, pleasure, I know not whether rapture would be too strong a word for the expressions which were discoverable in his countenance.

My own mind had the moment before been impassioned; and the same sensations thrilling as it were through my veins might mislead me, and induce me to suppose things that had no existence. Still I do not think I was mistaken. And if not,
what

what have I done? Have I not thoughtlessly betrayed him into a belief that I mean to favour a passion which I should think it criminal to encourage!

I know not why I delay so long to explain my sentiments. It is the weak fear of not doing justice to my cause; of not convincing, and of making him unhappy, for whom I would sacrifice my life, every thing but principle, to make him the very reverse.

However this must and shall soon be ended. I do not pretend to fix a day, but it shall not be a very distant one. I will arrange my thoughts, collect my whole force, and make an essay which I am convinced cannot fail, unless by my fault. The task is perhaps the most severe I have ever yet undertaken. I will remember this, and I hope my exertions will be adequate.

Adieu, my dear Louisa: and, when you come to this place, imagine me for a moment in your arms.

A. W. ST. IVES.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

Chateau de Villebrun.

NEVER was fellow so pestered with malverse accidents as I am; and all of my own contriving! I am the prince of Numskuls! The journey to the Chateau was a project of my own; and whom should I meet here but the Count de Beaunoir! The very same with whom I was prevented from fighting, by this insolent son of a steward! They knew each other instantly; and the whole story was told in the presence of Anna. My foolish pride would never before let me mention to her that a fellow, like him, could oblige me to put up

up the sword I had drawn in anger. Nor can I now tell why I did not run him through, the instant he dared to interfere!

I cut a cursed ridiculous figure! But the youth is running up a long score, which I foresee he will shortly be obliged to discharge. Damn him! I cannot think of him with common patience! I know not why I ever mention his name!

I have raised another nest of wasps about my ears. The French fops, here, all buzz and swarm around her; each making love to her, with all the shrugs, grimaces, and ready made raptures of which he is master; and to which I am obliged patiently to listen, or shew myself an ass. These fellows submit to every kind of monopoly, except of woman; and to pretend an exclusive right to her is, in their opinion, only worthy of a barbarian. But the most forward and tormenting of them all is my quondam friend, the Count; who is half a lunatic, but of so diverting a kind that, ere a man has time to be angry, he either cuts a caper, utters
an

an absurdity, or acts some mad antic or other, that sets gravity at defiance.

Not that any man, who had the smallest pretensions to common sense, could be jealous, either of him or any one of these apes. And yet jealous I am! My dotage, Fairfax, is come very suddenly upon me; and neither you, nor any one of the spirited fellows, whose company I used to delight in, can despise me half so much as I despise myself — A plebeian! — A — ! I could drink gall, eat my elbows, renounce all my gods, and turn Turk! — Ay, laugh if you will; what care I? —

I have taken a turn into the park, in search of a little cool air and common sense.

All the world is met here, on purpose to be merry; and merry they are determined to be. The occasion is a marriage, in the true French style, between my very good friend, the Marquis de Villebrun, an old

old fellow upwards of sixty, and a young creature of fifteen; a child, a chit, just taken out of a convent; in which, but for this or some such preposterous match, she might have remained, till time should have bestowed wrinkles and ugliness as bountifully upon her as it has done upon her Narcissus, the bridegroom. The women flock busily round her, in their very good-natured way, purposely to form her. The men too are very willing to lend their aid; and, under such tuition, she cannot but improve apace. Why are not you here, Fairfax? I have had twenty temptations to take her under my pupillage; but that I dare not risk the loss of this divinity.

The purpose of our meeting however is, as I said, to be joyous. It is teeming time therefore with every brain, that has either wit, folly, or fancy enough to contribute to the general festivity. And various are their inventions, and stratagems, to excite surprise, attract visitors, and keep up the holiday farce of the scene. Musicians, painters, artists, jugglers, sages, all whose
fame,

fame, no matter of what motley kind, has reached the public ear, and whom praise or pay can bring together, are assembled. Poets are invited to read their productions; and as reading well is no mean art, and writing well still much more difficult, you may think what kind of an exhibition your every day poetasters make. Yet, like a modern play, they are certain of unbounded applause.

Last night we had a *Fête Champêtre*; which it must be granted, was a most accurate picture of nature, and the manners of rustics! The simplicity of the shepherd life could not but be excellently represented, by the ribbands, jewels, gauze, tiffany, and fringe, with which we were bedaubed; and the ragouts, frigafecs, spices, fauces, wines, and *liqueurs*, with which we were regaled! Not to mention being served upon plate, by an army of footmen! But then, it was in the open air; and that was prodigiously pastoral!

When we were sufficiently tired of eating and drinking, we all got up to dance;
and

and the mild splendour of the moon was utterly eclipsed, by the glittering dazzle of some hundreds of lamps; red, green, yellow, and blue; the rainbow burlesqued; all mingled, in fantastic wreaths and forms, and suspended among the foliage; that the trees might be as fine as ourselves! The invention, disposition, and effect, however, were highly applauded. And, since the evil was small and the mirth great, what could a man do, but shake his ears, kick his heels, cut capers, laugh, sing, shout, squall, and be as mad as the best?

To-morrow night we are to have fireworks; which will be no less rural. I was in a splenetic humour, and indulged myself in an exclamation against such an abominable waste of gunpowder; for which I got reproved by my angelic monitress, who told me that, of all its uses and abuses, this was the most innocent.

I suppose our stay here will not be less than a fortnight. But I have left orders for all letters to be sent after me; so

that your heroic epistles will come safe and
soon to hand.

Which is all at this present writing from

your very humble servant

to command,

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER XXXVII.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Chateau de Villebrun.

IN compliance with the very warm entreaties of our kind French friends, we have been hurried away from the metropolis sooner than was intended. We are
at

at present in the country, at the Chateau de Villebrun : where, if we are not merry, it is not for the want of laughing. Our feet and our tongues are never still. We dance, talk, sing, ride, sail, or rather paddle about in a small but romantic lake ; in short we are never out of exercise.

Clifton is as active as the best, and is very expert in all feats of agility. With the French he seems to dance for the honor of his nation ; and, with me, from a desire to prove that the man who makes pretensions to me, which he now does openly enough, is capable of every excellence.

You know, Louisa, how much I despise the affectation of reserve ; but he is so enterprising a youth that I am sometimes obliged, though very unwillingly, to exert a little mild authority.

The French, old or young, ugly or handsome, all are lovers ; and are as liberal of their amorous sighs, and addresses, as if each were an Adonis. Clifton is well acquainted with foreign manners, or I can perceive their gallantry to me would make

him half mad. As it is, he has been little less than rude, to one or two of the most forward of my pretended admirers.

I speak in the plurul, as if we were rather in town than at a country seat; and so we appear to be. The French nobility do not seem to have any taste for solitude. Their love of variety induces them to change the scene; but the same tumult of guests and visitors, coming and going, is every where their delight. Whatever can attract company they seek with avidity. I am dear to them, because I am an English beauty, as they tell me, and all the world is desirous of paying its court to me.

Clifton has equal or perhaps greater merits of the same kind. And I assure you, Louisa, the women here can pay their court more artfully and almost as openly as the men.

Frank is idolized by them, because he reads Shakespeare. You would wonder to hear the praises they bestow upon him, and which indeed he richly deserves, though

though not one in ten of them understands a word he says. *C'est beau ! C'est magnifique ! C'est superbe ! C'est sublime !* Such is their continual round of good-natured superlatives, which they apply on all occasions, with a sincere desire to make others as happy as they endeavour to persuade themselves to be. Frank treats their gallantry with a kind of silent contempt, otherwise he would be a much greater favourite.

Perhaps you will be surprised to find me still guilty of procrastination, and to hear me describing French manners, instead of the mode in which I addressed a youth whom I have accused myself of having, in a certain sense, misled, and kept in suspense. I can only answer that my intentions have been frustrated ; chiefly indeed by this country excursion, though in part by other accidents. My mind has not indulged itself in indolence ; it could not ; it is too deeply interested. But, the more I have thought, the more have I been confirmed in my former opinion. This is the

E. 3

hour

hour of trial: this is the time to prove I have some real claims to that superiority which I have been so ready to flatter myself I possess. Were there nothing to regret, nay were there not something to suffer, where would be the merit of victory?—But, on the other hand, how much is there to gain!—A mind of the first order to be retrieved!—A Clifton!—A brother of Louisa!

This appears to be a serious crisis.—Again I must repeat how much I am afraid of being hurried forward too fast.—An error at this moment might be fatal. Clifton is so much alarmed by the particular respect which the Count de Beaunoir [A pleasant kind of madman, who is a visitant here.] pays me, that he has this instant been with me, confessed a passion for me, in all the strong and perhaps extravagant language which custom has seemed to authorise, and has entreated with a degree of warmth and earnestness that

that could scarcely be resisted, my permission to mention the matter immediately to Sir Arthur.

It became me to speak without disguise. I told him I was far from insensible of his merits; that a union with the brother of my Louisa, if propriety, duty, and affection should happen to combine, would be the first wish of my heart; that I should consider any affectation and coyness as criminal; but that I was not entirely free from doubt; and, before I could agree to the proposal being made to Sir Arthur, I thought it necessary we should mutually compare our thoughts, and scrutinize as it were each other to the very soul; that we might not act rashly, in the most serious of all the private events of life.—You know my heart, Louisa; at least as well as I myself know it; and I am fearful of being precipitate.

He seemed rather disappointed, and was impatient to begin the conversation I wished for immediately.

I told him I was unprepared; my
E 4 thoughts.

thoughts were not sufficiently collected; and that the hurry in which we at present exist would scarcely allow me time to perform so necessary a duty. But, that I might avoid the least suspicion of coquetry, if it were his desire, I should shut myself up for a day from company and examine whether there were any real impediments; that I would ask myself what my hopes and expectations were; and that I requested, or indeed expected that he should do the same. I added however that, if he pleased, it would be much more agreeable to me to defer this serious task, at least till we should return to Paris.

He repeated my words, if it would be much more agreeable to me, impatient and uneasy though he owned he was, he must submit.

I answered I required no submission, except to reason; to which I hoped both he and I should always be subject.

Love, he replied, was so disdainful of restraint that it would not acknowledge the control of reason itself. However, by representing

representing to him how particular our mutual absence from the company would seem, unless we could condescend to tell some falsehood, which I would not I said suppose possible to either of us, I prevailed on him to subscribe to this short delay.

His passions and feelings are strong.— One minute he seemed affected by the approbation which, as far as I could with truth, I did not scruple to bestow on his many superior gifts; and the next to conceive some chagrin that I should for a moment hesitate. The noblest natures, Louisa, are the most subject to pride, can the least endure neglect, and are aptest to construe whatever is not directly affirmative in their favour into injustice.

With respect to the Count de Beaunoir, he has been more passionate, in expressing how much he admires me, than my reserve to him can have authorised; except so far as he follows the manners of his country, and the impulse of his peculiar character. I suppose he means little; though he has said much. Not that

I am certain. He may be more in earnest than I desire; but I hope he is not; because if I am to be your sister as well as your friend, I should be sorry that any thing should excite a shadow of doubt in the mind of Clifton.

The Count is one of the Provençal nobility; a whimsical creature, with an imagination amazingly rapid, but extravagant. Your brother calls him Count Shatter-brain; and I tell him that he forgets he has some claim to the title himself. The Count has read the old Provençal poets, and romance writers, till he has made himself a kind of Don Quixote; except that he has none of the Don's delightful systematic gravity. The Count on the contrary amuses by his want of system, and his quick, changeable incongruity. He is in raptures one moment with what he laughs at the next. Were it not for the mad follies of jealousy, against which we cannot be too guarded, the manner in which he addresses, or in his own language adores me, would be pleasant. If I wished to pass
my

my life in laughing, I would certainly marry the Count.

I am called to dinner. Adieu.

Ever and ever yours,

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER XXXVIII.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Chateau de Villebrun.

MY alarms, Louisa, increase; and with them my anxious wishes for an eclaircissement with Frank. Clifton has too strongly imbibed high but false notions of honour

and revenge. His quick, apt, and versatile talents are indubitable. He wants nothing but the power to curb and regulate his passions, to render him all that his generous and excellent sister could desire. But at present his sensibility is too great. He scarcely can brook the slightest tokens of disapprobation. He is rather too firmly persuaded that he deserves applause, and admiration; and that reproof he scarcely can deserve; or, if he did, to submit to it he imagines would be dishonourable.

Frank and he behave more than usually cool to each other: I know not why, unless it has been occasioned by an incident which happened yesterday. Clifton has bought an English hunter, from one of his countrymen at Paris, which he was exhibiting to his French friends, whose horsemanship is very different from ours, and who were surprised to see him ride so fearlessly over gates and other impediments. They continued their airing in the park of Villebrun, and turned round a kind of haha, which was both deep and wide, and

and about half full of water, by the side of which they saw a party of ladies standing, and me among the rest. Frank was with us.

One of the gentlemen asked whether the horse could leap over the haha: to which Clifton made no answer, but immediately clapped spurs to his hunter, and over he flew. The whole company, gentlemen and ladies, broke out into exclamations of surprise; and Clifton turned his horse's head round, and regained his former place.

While they were wondering, Frank Henley happened to make it a matter of doubt whether a man or a horse could leap the farthest; and Clifton, continually in the habit of contending with Frank, said it was ridiculous to start such an argument, unless he would first shew that he himself could make the same leap. Frank, piqued in his turn, retired a few yards; and, without pulling off his coat or deigning to leap, he made a short run and a hop and sprung over.

You

You may imagine that the kind and good folks, who love to be astonished, and still more to tell the greatness of their astonishment, were manifold in their interjections. Frank, in order to rejoin the company, was obliged a second time to cross the haha; which he did with the same safety and truly amazing agility as he had done before.

Clifton, indulging his wrong habits, though I have no doubt admiring Frank as much as the rest, told him in a kind of sarcastic banter that, though he could not prove the equality of mankind, he had at least proved himself equal to a horse. To which Frank replied he was mistaken; for that he had shewn himself equal to the horse and his rider.

This answer I fear dwells upon the mind of Clifton; and I scarcely myself can tell whether it were or were not worthy of Frank. How can Clifton be wilfully blind to such courage, rectitude of heart, understanding and genius?

The

The stern unrelenting fortitude of Frank, in the cause of justice, and some symptoms of violence in the impetuous Clifton, have inspired me with apprehensions ; and have induced me to behave with more reserve and coldness to Frank than I ever before assumed.

Yet, Louisa, my heart is wrung to see the effect it produces. He has a mind of such discriminating power, such magnanimity, that an injury to it is a deep, a double sin ; and every look, every action testify that he thinks himself injured, by the distance with which I behave. Oh that he himself might be impelled to begin the subject with which my mind is labouring !

This is wrong ; I am ashamed of my own cowardice. Yet would there not be something terrifying in a formal appointment, to tell him what it seems must be told ? — Yes, Louisa, must — And is there not danger he should think me severe ; nay unjust ? — Would it were over ! — I hope he will not think
so

fo of me!—It must be done!—Must!
—Must!

Indeed, Louisa, I could be a very woman—But I will not!—No, no!
—It is passed—I have put my handkerchief to my eyes and it is gone—I have repressed an obstinate heaving of the heart—

Let her blame me, if I deserve it, but my Louisa must see me as I am—Yet I will conquer—Be sure I will—But I must not sing his song any more!

A. W. ST. IVES.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

Chateau de Villebrun.

OH, my friend, my heart is torn! I am on the rack! My thoughts are all tumult! My passions rebel! I seem to have yielded up the best prerogative of man, reason; and to have admitted revolt, anarchy, and desolation!

Her manner is changed! Wholly! She is become cold, reserved; has marked me out for neglect; smiles on me no more; not a sigh escapes her. And why? What have I done? I am unconscious. Have I been too presuming? Perhaps so. But why

why did her looks never till now speak her meaning as intelligibly as they do at present? I could not then have mistaken them. Why, till now, has she seemed to regard me with that sweet amenity which was so flattering to hope?

Perhaps, in the distraction of my thoughts, I am unjust to her. And shall I, pretending as I do to love so pure, shall I become her accuser? What if she meant no more than that commerce of grateful kindness, which knits together human society, and renders it delightful?

Yet this sudden change! So evidently intentional! The smiles too which she bestows on the brother of Louisa, and the haughty airs of triumph which he assumes, what can these be? Confident in himself, ardent in his desires, unchecked by those fears which are the offspring of true delicacy, his passions violent, and his pride almost insufferable, he thinks he loves.— But he is ignorant of the alarms, the tremors, the “fitful fevers” of love.

I cannot endure my present torture. I
must

must seek a desperate end to it, by explanation. Why do I delay? Coward that I am! What worse can happen than despair? And is not despair himself preferable to that worst of fiends, suspense? What do I mean by despair? Would I, being rejected, desert my duty, sink into self, and poorly linger in wretchedness; or basely put an end to existence? Violently end that which ought to be devoted to the good of others?—How did so infernal a thought enter my mind?—Can I be so very lost a thing?—No!—Despair is something confused, something horrid: I know not what. It may intrude upon me, at black and dismal intervals; but it shall not overwhelm me. I will shake it off. I will meet my destiny.

The clouds are gathering; the storm approaches; I hear the distant thunder rolling, this way it drives; it points at me; it must suddenly burst! Be it so. Grant me but the spirit of a man, and I yet shall brave its fury. If I am a poor braggart, a half believer in virtue, or virtuous only
in

in words, the feeble victim then must justly perish.

I cannot endure my torments! Cannot, because there is a way to end them. It shall be done.

I blush to read, blush to recollect the rhapsodies of my own perturbed mind! Madman! 'Tis continually thus. Day after day I proceed, reasoning, reproof, doubting, wishing, believing and despairing alternately.

Once again, where is this strange impossibility?—In what does it consist?—Are we not both human beings? What law of Nature has placed her beyond my hopes?—What is rank? Does it imply superiority of mind? Or is there any other superiority?—Am I not a man?—And who is more? Have the titled earned their dignities by any proofs of exalted virtue? Were not these dignities things of accident, in which the owners had no share, and of which they are generally unworthy? And shall hope be thus cowed and killed, without my daring to exert the first and most unalienable of

of the rights of man, freedom of thought? Shall I not examine what these high distinctions truly are, of which the bearers are so vain?

This Clifton——! Thou knowest not how he treats me. And can she approve, can she second his injustice?—Surely not!—Yet does she not dedicate her smiles to him, her conversation, her time? Does she not shun me, discountenance me, and reprove me, by her silence and her averted eyes?

Once again it must and shall have an end!——I have repeated this too often; but my next shall shew thee I am at length determined.

F. HENLEY.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Chateau de Villebrun.

AN affair has just happened in this country which is the universal topic of conversation. The daughter of a noble and wealthy family has fallen in love with a man of uncommon learning, science, and genius, but a musician. In consequence of his great skill and reputation, he was employed to teach her music ; and she it appears was too sensible, at least for the decorum of our present manners, of his worth.

The

The ability to discover his merit implies merit in herself, and the musician and lady were equally enamoured of each other. A plan for elopement consequently was laid, and put in execution; but not effectually, for, before the lovers had passed the confines of the kingdom, they were pursued and overtaken.

The musician knew his own personal danger, and by a stratagem fortunately escaped from his bonds, and attained a place of safety. The lady was brought back; and, from the severity of the French laws and the supposed atrocity of the crime, it is generally affirmed that the musician, notwithstanding his talents and fame, had he been secured, would have been executed.

I have mentioned this adventure, my dear Louisa, not so much for it's own sake as for what relates to myself. It was natural that I should feel compassion for mistakes, if mistakes they be, which have so great an affinity to virtue; and that I should plead for the lovers, and against the
barbarity

barbarity of laws so unjust and inhuman. For it is certain that, had not the musician been put to death, his least punishment would have been perpetual imprisonment.

In a former letter I mentioned the increasing alarms of Sir Arthur; and this was a fit opportunity for him to shew how very serious and great those alarms are. He opposed me, while I argued in behalf of the lovers, with what might in him be called violence; affirmed it was a crime for which no merit or genius could compensate; highly applauded those wholesome laws that prevented such crimes, and preserved the honour of noble families from attaint; lamented the want of similar laws in England; and spoke of the conduct of the young lady with a degree of bitterness which from him was unusual. In fine, the spirit of his whole discourse was evidently to warn me, and explicitly to declare what his opinions on this subject are.

Had I before wanted conviction, he fully convinced me, on this occasion, of the impossibility of any union between me

and Frank Henley; at least without sacrificing the felicity of my father and my family, and from being generally and sincerely beloved by them, rendering myself the object of eternal reproach, and almost of hatred.

Previous to this conversation, I was uneasy at the state of my own mind, and particularly at what I suppose to be the state of Mr. Henley's; and this uneasiness is at present very much increased.

Once again, Louisa, it must immediately have an end. I can support it no longer. I must be firm. My half-staggering resolution is now fixed. I cannot, must not doubt. My father and family must not be sacrificed to speculative probabilities. Frank is the most deserving of mankind; and that it should be a duty to reject the most deserving of mankind, as the friend of my life, my better self, my husband, is strange; but I am nevertheless convinced that a duty it is. Yes; the conflicts of doubt are over. I must and will persevere.

Poor Frank! To be guilty of injustice to a nature so noble, to wring a heart so generous, and to neglect desert so unequalled, is indeed a killing thought! But the stern, the unrelenting dictates of necessity must be obeyed. The neglect, the injustice and the cruelty are the world's, not mine: my heart disavows them, revolts at them, detests them!

Heaven bless my Louisa, and give her superior prudence to guard and preserve her from these too strong susceptibilities! May the angel of fortitude never forsake her, as she seems half inclined to do her poor

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Chateau de Villebrun.

AT last, my dear Louisa, the charm is broken: the spell of silence is dissolved. Incapable any longer of restraint, passion has burst its bounds, and strong though the contest was, victory has declared for reason.

My change of behaviour has produced this effect. Not that I applaud myself: on the contrary, I am far from pleased with my own want of fortitude. I have even assumed an austerity which I did not feel.

I do not mean to say that all appearances, relative to myself, were false. No. I was uneasy; desirous to speak, desirous that he should speak, and could accomplish neither. I accused myself of having given hopes that were seductive, and wished to retract. In short, I have not been altogether so consistent as I ought to be; as my letters to you, my friend, will witness.

Various little incidents preceded and indeed helped to produce this swell and overflow of the heart, and the eclaircissement that followed. In the morning at breakfast, Frank took the cakes I usually eat to hand to me; and Clifton, whose watchful spirit is ever alert, caught up a plate of bread and butter, to offer me at the same instant. His looks shewed he expected the preference. I was sorry for it, and paused for a moment. At last the principle of not encouraging Frank prevailed, and I took some bread and butter from Clifton. It was a repetition of slights, which Frank had lately met with, and he felt

felt it; yet he bowed with a tolerable grace, and put down his plate.

He soon after quitted the room, but returned unperceived by me.

The young marchioness had breakfasted, and retired to her toilet; where some of the gentlemen were attending her. She had left a snuff-box of considerable value with me, which I had forgotten to return; and, with that kind of sportive cheerfulness which I rather encourage than repress, I called—"Here! Where all my esquires? I want a messenger."

Clifton heard me, and Frank was unexpectedly at my elbow. Had I known it, I should not have spoken so thoughtlessly. Frank came forward and bowed. Clifton called—"Here am I, ready, fair lady, to execute your behests."

I was a second time embarrassed. After a short hesitation, I said—"No—I have changed my mind."

Frank retired; but Clifton advanced, with his usual gaiety, answering,—“Nay, nay! I have not earned half a crown

“ yet this morning, and I must not be
“ cheated of my fare.” I would still have
refused, but I perceived Clifton began to
look serious, and I said to him—“ Well,
“ well, good man, here then, take this
“ snuff-box to the marchioness, she may
“ want it : but do not blunder, and break
“ it ; for if you do I shall dismiss you my
“ service. Recollect the picture in the
“ lid, set with diamonds !”

- It was fated to be a day of mortification
to Frank. His complaisance had induced
him to comply with the request of the mar-
chioness, that he would read one of the
mad scenes in Lear, though he knew she
had not the least acquaintance with the
English language. But she wanted amuse-
ment, and was pleased to mark the pro-
gress of the passions ; which I never saw
so distinctly and highly expressed as in his
countenance when he reads Shakespeare.

I happened to come into her apartment,
for the French are delightfully easy of ac-
cess, and the reading was instantly inter-
rupted. I was the very person she wanted
to

to see. How should we spend the evening? The country was horribly dull! There had been no new visitors these two days! Should we have a dance? I gave my assent, and away she ran to tell every body.

I followed; Frank came after me, and with some reluctance, foreboding a repulse, asked whether he should have the pleasure to dance with me. His manner and the foregone circumstances made me guess his question before he spoke. My answer was—"I have just made a promise to myself that I will dance with "Mr. Clifton." It was true: the thought had passed through my mind.

Mr. Clifton, madam!

Yes——

You—you——

I have not seen Mr. Clifton?—Right—
But I said I had made the promise to *myself*.

Poor Frank could contain no longer! I see, madam, said he, I am despised; and I deserve contempt; I crouch to it, I in-

vite it, and have obtained a full portion of it—Yet why?—What have I done?—Why is this sudden change? The false glitter that deceives mankind then is irresistible! But surely, madam, justice is as much my due as if my name were Clifton. Spurn me, trample on me, when I sully myself by vice and infamy! But till then I should once have hoped to have escaped being humbled in the dust, by one whom I regarded as the most benignant, as well as the most deserving and equitable of earthly creatures!

This is indeed a heavy charge: and I am afraid much of it is too true. Here is company coming. I am sorry I cannot answer it immediately.

I can suffer any thing rather than exist under my present tortures. Will you favour me so far, madam, as to grant me half an hour's hearing?

Willingly. It is what I wish. Come to my apartment after dinner.

Clifton came up, and I have no doubt read in our countenances that something more

more than common had passed. Indeed I perceived it, or thought so; but his imagination took another turn, in consequence of my informing him, that I had been just telling Frank I had promised myself to be his (Clifton's) partner. He thanked me, his countenance shewed it as well as his words, for my kindness. He was coming, he said, to petition, the instant he had heard of the dance. But still he looked at Frank, as if he thought it strange that I should condescend to account to him for my thoughts and promises.

Dinner time came, and we sat down to table. But the mind is sometimes too busy to attend to the appetites. I and Frank ate but little. He rose first from table, that he might not seem to follow me. His delicacy never slumbers. I took the first opportunity to retire. Frank was presently with me, and our dialogue began. The struggle of the feelings ordained that I should be the first speaker.

I have been thinking very seriously,

F 5

Frank,

Frank, of what you said to me this morning.

Would to heaven you could forget it, madam !

Why so ?

I was unjust ! A madman ! A vain fool ! An idiot !—Pardon this rude vehemence, but I cannot forgive myself for having been so ready to accuse one whom !—I cannot speak my feelings !—I have deserted myself !—I am no longer the creature of reason, but the child of passion !—My mind is all tumult, all incongruity !

You wrong yourself. The error has been mutual, or rather I have been much the most to blame. I am very sensible of and indeed very sorry for my mistake—Indeed I am—I perceive you indulging hopes that cannot be realised, and—

Cannot, madam ?

Never !—I can see you think yourself despised ; but you do yourself great wrong.

My

My mind is so disturbed, by the abrupt and absurd folly with which I accused you, unheard, this morning, that it is less now in a state to do my cause justice than at any other time—Still I will be a man—Your word, madam, was—Cannot!—

It was.

Permit me to ask, is it person—?

No—certainly not. Person would with me be always a distant consideration.—[You, Louisa, know how very far from exceptionable the person of Frank is, if that were any part of the question.]

You are no flatterer, madam, and you have thought proper occasionally to express your approbation of my morals and mind.

Yet my expressions have never equalled my feelings!—Never!

Then, madam, where is the impossibility? In what does it consist? The world may think meanly of me, for the want of what I myself hold in contempt: but surely you cannot join in the world's injustice?

I cannot think meanly of you.

I have no titles. I am what pride calls nobody : The son of a man who came penniless into the service of your family ; in which to my infinite grief he has grown rich. I would rather starve than acquire opulence by the efforts of cunning, flattery, and avarice, and if I blush for any thing, relative to family, it is for that. I am either above or below the wish of being what is insolently called well born.

You confound, or rather you do not separate, two things which are very distinct ; that which I think of you, and that which the world would think of me, were I to encourage hopes which you would have me indulge.

Your actions, madam, shew how much and how properly you disregard the world's opinion.

But I do not disregard the effects which that opinion may have, upon the happiness of my father, my family, myself, and my husband, if ever I should marry.

If truth and justice require it, madam, even all these ought to be disregarded.

Indubitably.

Did I know a man upon the face of the earth, who had a still deeper sense of your high qualities and virtues than I have, who understood them more intimately, would study them, emulate them more, and profit better by them, I have confidence enough in myself to say I would resign you without repining. But, when I think on the union between mind and mind—the aggregate—! I want language, madam!

I understand you.

When I reflect on the wondrous happiness we might enjoy, while mutually exerting ourselves in the general cause of virtue, I confess the thought of renouncing so much bliss, or rather such a duty to myself and the world, is excruciating torture.

Your idea of living for the cause of virtue delights me; it is in full concord with my own. But whether that great cause would best be promoted by our union,

union, or not, is a question which we are incapable of determining: though I think probabilities are for the negative. Facts and observation have given me reason to believe that the too easy gratification of our desires is pernicious to the mind; and that it acquires vigour and elasticity from opposition.

And would you then upon principle, madam, marry a man whom you must despise?

No, not despise. If indeed I were all I could wish to be, I am persuaded I should despise no one. I should endeavour to instruct the ignorant, and reform the erroneous. However, I will tell you what sort of a man I should wish to marry. First he must be a person of whom no prejudice, no mistake of any kind, should induce the world, that is, the persons nearest and most connected with me in the world, to think meanly—Shall I be cited by the thoughtless, the simple, and the perverse, in justification of their own improper conduct?—You cannot wish it,
Frank !

Frank!—Nor is this the most alarming fear—My friends!—My relations!—My father!—To incur a father's reproach for having dishonoured his family were fearful: but to meet, to merit, to live under his curse!—God of heaven forbid!

Must we then never dare to counteract mistake? Must mind, though enlightened by truth, submit to be the eternal slave of error?—What is there that is thus dreadful, madam, in the curse of prejudice? Have not the greatest and the wisest of mankind been cursed by ignorance?

It is not the curse itself that is terrible, but the torture of the person's mind by whom it is uttered!—Nor is it the torture of a minute, or a day, but of years!—His child, his beloved child, on whom his hopes and heart were fixed, to whom he looked for all the bliss of filial obedience, all the energies of virtue, and all the effusions of affection, to see himself deserted by her, unfeelingly deserted, plunged in sorrows unutterable, eternally dishonoured, the index and the bye-word
of

of scandal, scoffed at for the fault of her whom his fond and fatherly reveries had painted faultless, whispered out of society because of the shame of her in whom he gloried, and I this child!

Were the conflict what your imagination has figured it, madam, your terrors would be just—But I have thought deeply on it, and know that your very virtues misguide you. It would not be torture, nor would it be eternal—On the contrary, madam, I, poor as I am in the esteem of an arrogant world, I proudly affirm it would be the less and not the greater evil.

You mistake!—Indeed, Frank, you mistake!—The fear of poverty, the sneers of the world, ignominy itself, were the pain inflicted but confined to me, I would despise. But to stretch my father upon the rack, and with him every creature that loves me, even you yourself!—It must not be!—It must not be!

I too fatally perceive, madam, your
mind

mind is subjected by these phantoms of fear.

No, no—not phantoms; real existences; the palpable beings of reason!—Beside what influence have I in the world, except over my friends and family? And shall I renounce this little influence, this only power of doing good, in order to gratify my own passions, by making myself the outcast of that family and of that world to whom it is my ambition to live an example?—My family and the world are prejudiced and unjust: I know it. But where is the remedy? Can we work miracles? Will their prejudices vanish at our bidding?—I have already mortally offended the most powerful of my relations; Lord Fitz-Allen, by refusing a foolish peer of his recommendation. He is my maternal uncle; proud, prejudiced, and unforgiving. Previous to this refusal I was the only person in our family whom he condescended to notice. He prophesied, in the spleen of passion, I should soon bring shame on my family; and I

as boldly retorted I would never dishonour the name of St. Ives—I spoke in their own idiom, and meant to be so understood——Recollect all this!—Be firm, be just to yourself and me!——Indeed, indeed, Frank, it is not my heart that refuses you; it is my understanding; it is principle; it is a determination not to do that which my reason cannot justify—Join with me, Frank—Resolve—Give me your hand——Let us disdain to set mankind an example which would indeed be a virtuous and a good one, were all the conditions understood; but which, under the appearances it would assume, would be criminal in the extreme.

My hand and heart, madam, are everlastingly yours: and it is because this heart yearns to set the world an example, higher infinitely than that which you propose, that thus I plead!—This opportunity is my first and last—I read my doom—Bear with me therefore while I declare my sensations and my thoughts.—The passion I feel is as unlike what is usually meant

meant by love as day to night, grace to deformity, or truth to falsehood. It is not your fine form, madam, supremely beautiful though you are, which I love. At least I love it only as an excellent part of a divine whole. It is your other, your better, your more heavenly self, to which I have dared to aspire. I claim relationship to your mind; and again declare I think my claims have a right, which none of the false distinctions of men can supersede. Think then, madam, again I conjure you, think ere you decide.—If the union of two people whose pure love, founded on an unerring conviction of mutual worth, might promise the reality of that heaven of which the world delights to dream; whose souls, both burning with the same ardour to attain and to diffuse excellence, would mingle and act with incessant energy; who, having risen superior to the mistakes of mankind, would disseminate the same spirit of truth, the same internal peace, the same happiness, the same virtues which they themselves possess

possess among thousands ; who would admire, animate, emulate each other ; whose wishes, efforts, and principles would all combine to one great end, the general good ; who, being desirous only to dispense blessings, could not fail to enjoy ; if a union like this be not strictly conformable to the laws of eternal truth, or if there be any arguments, any perils, any terrors which ought to annul such a union, I confess that the arguments, the perils, the terrors, and eternal truth itself are equally unknown to me.

We paused for a moment. The beauty, force, and grandeur of the picture he had drawn staggered me. Yet it was but a repetition of what had frequently presented itself to my mind, in colours almost as vivid as those with which he painted. I had but one answer, and replied—

The world !—My family !—My father !
—I cannot encounter the malediction of a father !—What ! Behold him in an agony of cursing his child ?—Imagination shudders and shrinks from the guilty picture
with

with horror!—I cannot!—I cannot!—It must not be!—To foresee this misery so clearly as I do, and yet to seek it, would surely be detestable guilt.

Again we paused—He perceived my terrors were too violent to cede to any efforts of reason. His countenance changed; the energy of argument disappeared, and was succeeded by all the tenderness of passion. The decisive moment, the moment of trial was come. His features softened into that form which never yet failed to melt the heart, and he thus continued.

To the scorn of vice, the scoffs of ignorance, the usurpations of the presuming, and the contumelies of the proud, I have patiently submitted: but to find my great and as I thought infallible support wrested from me; to perceive that divine essence which I imagined too much a part of myself to do me wrong, overlooking me; rejecting me; dead to those sensations which I thought mutually pervaded and filled our hearts; to hear her, whom of all beings
on

on earth I thought myself most akin to, disclaim me ; positively, persistingly, un—

Unjustly ? — Was that the word, Frank ?—Surely not unjustly !—Oh, surely not !

And could those heavenly, those heart-winning condescensions on which I founded my hopes be all illusory ?—Could they ?—Did I dream that your soul held willing intercourse with mine, beaming divine intelligence upon me ? Was it all a vision when I thought I heard you pronounce the ecstatic sentence—*You could love me if I would let you ?*

No ; it was real. I revoke nothing that I have said or done. Do not, Frank, for the love of truth and justice do not think me insensible of your excellence, dead to your virtues, or blind to mind and merit which I never yet saw equalled !—Think not it is pride, or base insensibility of your worth ! Where is the day in which that worth has not increased upon me ?—Unjust to you ?—Oh !—No, no, no !—My heart bleeds at the thought ?—No !—It is my
love

love of you, my love of your virtues, your principles, and these alone are lovely, which has rendered me thus inflexible. If any thing could make you dearer to me than you are, it must be weakness; it must be something which neither you nor I ought to approve. All the good, or rather all the opportunities of doing good which mortal or immortal being can enjoy, do I wish you! Oh that I had prayers potent enough to draw down blessings on you! —Love you?—Yes!—The very idea bursts into passion. [The tears, Louisa, were streaming down my cheeks.] Why should you doubt of all the affection which virtue can bestow? Do you not deserve it?—Oh yes!—Love you in the manner you could wish I must not, dare not, ought not: but, as I ought, I love you infinitely! Ay, dear, dear Frank, as I ought, infinitely!

Louisa!—Blame me if thou wilt—But I kissed him!—The chastity of my thoughts defied misconstruction, and the purity of the will sanctified the extravagance of the act.

act. A daring enthusiasm seized me. I beheld his passions struggling to attain the very pinnacle of excellence. I wished to confirm the noble emulation, to convince him how different the pure love of mind might be from the meaner love of passion, and I kissed him ! I find my affections, my sensibilities, peculiarly liable to these strong sallies. Perhaps all minds of a certain texture are subject to such rapid and almost resistless emotions ; and whether they ought to be encouraged or counter-acted I have not yet discovered. But the circumstance, unexpected and strange as it was, suffered no wrong interpretation in the dignified soul of Frank. With all the ardour of affection, but chastened by every token of delicacy, he clasped me in his arms, returned my kiss, then sunk down on one knee, and exclaimed—Now let me die !——

After a moment's pause, I answered—No, Frank ! Live ! Live to be a blessing to the world, and an honour to the human race !

I took

I took a turn to the window, and after having calmed the too much of feeling which I had suffered to grow upon me, I continued the conversation.

I hope, Frank, we now understand each other; and that, as ~~this~~ is the first, so it will be the last contention of the passions in which we shall indulge ourselves.

Madam, though *I still think, nay feel a certainty of conviction, that you act from mistaken principles*, yet you support what you are persuaded is truth with such high, such self-denying virtue, that not to applaud, not to imitate you would be contemptible. You have and ought to have a will of your own. You practise what you believe to be the severest precepts of duty, with more than human fortitude. You resolve, in this particular, not to offend the prejudices of your family, and the world. I submit. To indulge sensibility but a little were to be heart-broken! But no personal grief can authorise me in deserting the post I am placed in; nor palliate the crime of neglecting its duties.

duties. *To the end of time I shall persist in thinking you mine by right ; but I will never trouble you more with an assertion of that right — Never !—Unless some new and unexpected claim should spring up, of which I see no probability.*

He bowed and was retiring.

Stay, Frank, I have something more to say to you—I have a requisition to make which after what has passed would to common minds appear unfeeling and almost capricious cruelty ; but I have no fear that yours should be liable to this mistake. Recollect but who and what you are, remember what are the best purposes of existence, the noblest efforts of mind, and then refuse me if you can—I have formed a project, and call upon you for aid—Cannot you guess?

Mr. Clifton, madam—?

Yes.

I fear it is a dangerous one ; and, whether my fears originate in selfishness or in penetration, they must be spoken. Yes, madam, I must warn you that the passions
of

of Mr. Clifton are, in my opinion, much more alarming than the resentment of your father.

But they are alarming only to myself. And ought danger to deter me?

Not if the good you design be practicable.

And what is impracticable, where the will is resolved?

Perhaps nothing—But the effort must be great, must be uncommon.

Has he not a mind worthy of such an effort? Would not his powers highly honour truth and virtue?

They would.

Will not you give me your assistance?

I would, madam, most willingly, would he but permit me. But I am his antipathy; a something noxious; an evil augury.

You have been particular in your attentions to me.

And must those attentions cease, madam?

They must be moderated; they must be cool, dispassionate, and then they will not alarm.—

alarm.—I cannot possibly be deceived in supposing it a duty, an indispensable duty to restore the mind of Clifton to its true station. If I fail, the fault must be my own. I am but young, yet many men have addressed me with the common-place language of admiration, love, and I know not what; or rather they knew not what; and, except yourself, Frank, I have not met with one from whom half so much might be hoped as from Clifton. He is the brother of my bosom friend. Surely, Frank, it is a worthy task—Join with me!—There is but one thing I fear. Clifton is haughty and intemperate. Are you a duellist, Frank?

No, madam.

Then you would not fight a duel?

Never, madam. No provocation, not the brand of cowardice itself, shall ever induce me to be guilty of such a crime.

Frank!—Oh excellent, noble youth!

Here, Louisa, our conversation abruptly ended. The company had risen from table, and we heard them in the corridor.

I requested

I requested him to retire, and he instantly obeyed.

Oh ! Louisa, with what sensations did he leave my mind glowing!—His conviction equals certainty, *that I act from mistaken principles ! To the end of time he shall persist in thinking me his by right !*—Can the power of language afford words more strong, more positive, more pointed?—How unjust have I been to my cause!—For surely I cannot be in an error!—'Tis afflicting, 'tis painful, nay it is almost terrifying to remember!—*Persist to the end of time ?*—Why did I not think more deeply?—I had a dark kind of dread that I should fail!—It cannot be the fault of my cause!—Wrong him!—Guilty of injustice to him!—Surely, surely, I hope not!—What ! Become an example to the feeble and the foolish, for having indulged my passions and neglected my duties?—I?—His mind had formed a favourite plan, and could I expect it should be instantly relinquished?—I cannot conceive torment equal to the idea of doing him

wrong!—Him?—Again and again I hope not! I hope not! I hope not!

Then the kiss, Louisa?—Did I or did I not do right, in showing him how truly I admire and love his virtues? Was I or was I not guilty of any crime, when, in the very acme of the passions, I so totally disregarded the customs of the world? Or rather, for that is the true question, could it produce any other effect than that which I intended? I am persuaded it could not. Nor, blame me who will, do I repent.—And yet, my friend, if you should think it wrong, I confess I should then feel a pang which I should be glad not to deserve. But be sincere. Though I need not warn you. No false pity can or ought to induce you to desert the cause of truth.

Adieu—My mind is not so much at its ease as I hoped, from this conversation; but at all times, and in all tempers, believe me to be, ever and ever,

Your own dear,

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER

LETTER XLII

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

Chateau de Villebrun.

ALL is over!—My hopes are at an end! —I am awakened from a dream, in which pain and pleasure were mingled to such excess as to render its continuance impossible.

Nor is this all. This trial, severe as it was, did not suffice. To the destruction of hope has been added the assault of insolence, accompanied with a portion of obloquy which heart scarcely can sustain—Oh, this Clifton!—But—Patience!

Yet let me do her justice. Mistaken though I am sure she is, the motives of her conduct are so pure that even mistake itself is lovely in her; and assumes all the energy, all the dignity of virtue. Oh what a soul is hers! Her own passions, the passions of others, when she acts and speaks, are all in subjection to principle. Yes, Oliver, of one thing at least she has convinced me: she has taught me, or rather made me feel, how poor a thing it is to be the slave of desire.

Not that I do not still adore her!—Ay, more than ever adore! But from henceforth my adoration shall be worthy of herself, and not degrading to me. From her I have learned what true love is; and the lesson is engraven on my heart. She can consider personal gratification with apathy, yet burn with a martyr's zeal for the promotion of universal good.

And shall I not rise equal to the bright example which she has set me? Shall I admire yet not imitate?

Did

Did she despise me? Did she reject me for my own sake?—No!—All the affection which mind can feel for mind she has avowed for me! And shall I grieve because another may be more happy?—And why more?—In what? Is not the union of souls the first, the most permanent of all alliances? That union is mine! No power can shake it. She openly acknowledges it; and has done, daily, hourly, in every word, in every action. Whither then would my wishes wander?

Oliver, I am a man, and subject to the shakes and agues of his fragile nature!—Yet it is a poor, a wretched plea; a foolish, and a false plea. Man is weak because he is willing to be weak. He crouches to the whip, and like a coward pities while he lashes himself. His wilful phrensy he calls irresistible, and weeps for the torments which he himself inflicts.

But once again this Clifton!—Read and tell me how I ought to act—I have received a blow from him, Oliver!—Yes, have tamely submitted to receive a blow!

What intolerable prejudices are these ! Why does my heart rebel so sternly, at what virtue so positively approves ?

I had just left her ; had that instant been rejected by her for his sake ; had been summoned to aid her, in weeding out error from his mind. She shewed me it was a noble task, and communicated to me her own divine ardour. Yes, Oliver ! I came from her, with a warmed and animated heart ; participating all her zeal. The most rigid, the most painful of all abstinence was demanded from me ; but should I shrink from a duty because I pity or because I love myself ? No. Such pusillanimity were death to virtue. I left her, while my thoughts glowed with the ardour of emulating her heroism ; and burned to do him all the good which she had projected.

He was at the end of the corridor, and saw me quit her apartment. His hot spirit caught the alarm instantaneously, and blazed in his countenance. He accosted me—

So, fir! You are very familiar with that lady! What right have you to intrude into her apartments?

When she herself desires me, fir, I have a right.

She desire you! 'Tis false!

Sir?

'Tis false, fir!

False?

Yes, fir. And falsehood deserves to be chastised!

Chastised? [It is in vain, Oliver, to endeavour to conceal the truth from myself; my folly incurred its own punishment—I repeated] Chastised? [I was lunatic enough to walk up to him, with a ridiculous and despicable air of defiance. He re-echoed my words, and instantly in contempt struck me on the cheek with the back of his hand.]

Yes, fir, chastised!

His rashness restored me to some sense of the farcical heroism which I had been aping. I hurried from him, without another word.

Oliver, I can conceive nothing more

painful than this wrestling, this tearing of passion from its purpose.

I walked a few minutes to calm my thoughts, and wrote him the following note.

“ SIR,

“ I FEEL at present the humility of
“ my situation: but not from your blow;
“ for that has brought me to myself, not
“ humbled me. No man can be degraded
“ by another; it must be his own act: and
“ you have degraded yourself, not me. My
“ error is in having, for a moment, yielded
“ to the impulse of passion. If you think
“ I fear you, continue to think so; till I
“ can shew my forbearance is from a better
“ motive. Cowardice might make
“ me kill you; but true courage will
“ teach me calmly to hear the world call
“ me coward, rather than commit an act
“ so wicked, so abhorred, as that of taking
“ or of throwing away life. I wished to
“ seek your friendship; and even now I
“ will

“ will not shun you. Make the world
“ imagine me a coward ; imagine me one
“ yourself, if you can. I will live under
“ the supposed obloquy ; and leave the
“ tenor of my life to shew whether living
“ be the act of fear, or of reason. I par-
“ don you, sir, and leave you to pardon
“ yourself.

“ F. HENLEY.”

My forbearance and this letter mitigated my sense of pain. Yet I am very ill satisfied with myself. Am I so easily to be moved ? 'Tis true the scene I had just quitted was fermenting, as it were, in my veins, and shaking my whole system.

What is worse, I am child enough to be tormented, in my own despite, by the recollection of having received a blow ! And why ? In many countries, and even in my own, among the class in which I was born, the stigma is none, or trifling—Stigma ? Absurd !—Cowardice !—Murder !—If vanity were ever becoming, I
have

have perhaps more reason to be vain, considering the danger to which I had exposed myself, of this than of any act of my life.

Well, well, Oliver—I hope these agitations are over; and that from this time thou wilt begin to think better of me.

I communicate my whole thoughts to thee. If the experiments made upon my mind can be of any use to thine, my letters will then answer the best of the purposes for which they are written.

F. HENLEY.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

COKE CLIFTON.

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

Chateau de Villebrun.

YOUR last, Fairfax, pleased me. You say truly, and I like your remark, "Such fellows ought not to claim a moment's attention from me. I should brush them away, like flies from my forehead, when they presume to tease or settle themselves upon me." I have taken your advice, and fly-flapped the wasp that was more willing than able to sting.

I have lately grown dissatisfied with myself; I know not how or why. I suspect

pect this youth, in part, has made me so, with his visionary morality. I hate such sermonizing. Who has a right to control me? Whose slave am I? I was born to rule, not to be ruled. My appetites are keen, my desires vast, and I would enjoy. Why else am I here? Delay to me is insufferable; suspense distracts me; and the possibility that another should be preferred to myself drives me mad! I too heartily despise the tame creatures, that crawl upon the earth, to suffer opposition from them. Who would be braved by bats and beetles, buzzing in his ears?

I never before saw a woman whom any temptation could have induced me to marry; and now I have found one I am troubled with doubts, infested with fears, and subjected to the intolerable penance of procrastination. Impeded in my course; and by what? Why, I am told to scrutinize myself, and to discover whether I am quite as perfect as it is necessary I should be! 'Tis unjust! 'Tis unkind! I did not doubt of her perfections; and
both

both love and pride, equally jealous of their honour, demand that mine should have been taken for granted.

The time has been when this would have been revenged. But I seem to be half subdued. My fierce spirit, before so untameable, declines contending with her. Not but I frequently feel it struggling with suffocation, kindling, and again ready to burst into a more furious blaze.

Yet let me do her justice. Mild, gentle, and affectionate, she conquers my impetuosity with prayers, and soothing, and with kindness irresistible. Still she conquers.

Then she suffers these animals to torment me. I am angry to think that, in so short a space, I should have so entirely lost all power over myself!

But where is the mortal that can look and not love? Were I myself not an actor in the play, how should I enjoy the perplexity of these French *amoureux*? There are I know not how many of them; each more busy than the other. 'Tis laughable

laughable to see with what industry they labour to make love according to her liking; for they find that their own trifling manner is inefficient, and can never succeed with her. One of them, that said crazy Provençal Count, is very earnest indeed in his endeavours; but she keeps him in due awe. And it is well perhaps for him that she does, or I would. Still however he is damned troublesome and impertinent; and I could wish she were more peremptory. Yet it is unjust to blame her, for the animal is so full of antics, that it is impossible to be angry.

After all, I am far from satisfied respecting myself and this youth, whom I condescended to chastise. It was beneath me. It gave him a sort of right to demand satisfaction: but he affects forbearance, because, as he pretends, he despises duelling. And I hear he has actually given proofs of the most undaunted courage. He wrote a short note of only three or four sentences on the subject, after I had struck him, which produced a very uncommon effect.

effect upon me, and made me half repent, and accuse myself of haughtiness, rashness, and insult.

But these things torture me. I am out of patience with them. What right has any pedant, because he thinks proper to vex and entangle his own brain with doubts, to force his gloomy dogmas upon me? Let those who love sackcloth wear it. Must I be made miserable, because an over-curious booby bewilders himself in inquiry, and galls his conscience, till, like the wrung withers of a battered post-horse, it shrinks and shivers at the touch of a fly's foot? What, shall I not enjoy the free air, the glorious sun, the flowers, the fruits, the viands, the whole stores of nature? Who shall impede, who shall dare disturb the banquet? Were it even a dream, the meddling fool that waked me should dearly repent his rashness.—Let speculative blockheads brew metaphysical nectar, make a hash of axioms, problems, corollaries and demonstrations; and feed on ideas and fatten. Be theirs the feast of
reason

reason and the flow of soul. But let me banquet with old Homer's jolly gods and heroes, revel with the Mahometan houris, or gain admission into the favourable sanctuary of the gormandizing priesthood, snuff the fumes from their altars, and gorge on the fat of lambs. Let cynic Catos truss up each his slovenly toga, rail at Helio-gabalus, and fast; but let me receive his card, with—"Sir, your company is requested to dine and sup."

I cannot forget this gardener's son. I am sometimes angry that I should for a single instant trouble myself with a fellow so much beneath me; and at others equally angry, for not shewing him the respect which he claims. There are moments in which I have even feared him as a rival; for when she speaks to him, which she is very ready to do, the usual mildness and benevolence of her voice and features are evidently increased. She must, she shall be more circumspect. Indeed I have made her so within these few days.

Prithee forgive all this. My mind is
not

not at ease ; but I know not why I should infect you with its malady. Write, relate something pleasant ; tell me what has happened to you last, and relieve the dissatisfaction I feel by your unaffected flow of gaiety. Adieu.

C. CLIFTON.

LET

LETTER XLIV.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Chateau de Villebrun.

I CANNOT sufficiently applaud the resolute propriety of Frank, since our last conversation. Indeed, Louisa, his fortitude is admirable ! He does not indulge self-compassion, by brooding over his own loss. Nor does he, like other mistaken people whose affections have met disappointment, suppose himself into sufferings, which swell into existence in proportion as they are imagined to be real. His evident determination is not to permit any selfish motive to detach him from the great purposes

purposes of life ; but cheerfully to submit to what is inevitable, without thinking it an evil.

In the mean time, I have been indulging a hope, which at moments has appeared almost a certainty, that Clifton, by our mutual efforts, shall acquire all this true ardour, which is so lovely in Frank. How sorry am I to observe that the haughtiness of Clifton and the coldness of Frank seem to be increasing ! To what can this be attributed ? Their behaviour is so peculiar that I almost dread something has happened, with which I am unacquainted.

But perhaps it is the present temper of my mind : the effect of sensations too irritable, doubts too tremulous, and fears too easily excited. I cannot forget the conversation : it haunts me ; and, did not Frank set me the example of fortitude, I have sometimes doubted of my own perseverance.

Oh, how mean is this in me ! Is not the task I have proposed to myself a worthy and a high one ? Am I not convinced it
is

is an inevitable duty? And shall he, even under a contrary conviction, outstrip me in the career?—Generous and excellent youth, I will imitate thy most eminent virtues!

The Count de Beaunoir still continues to be particular, in what he calls his adoration of me; but his tone and style are too romantic to authorize me in any serious remonstrance. Clifton is not pleased, and the Count and he have fallen into a habit of rallying each other, and vaunting of what lovers dare do, to prove their affection. Their irony took so serious a turn yesterday, that Clifton proposed they should load their pistols, and both holding by the corner of a handkerchief, fire at each other. Considering the temper in which they were, and the constitutional extravagance of the Count, the proposal was terrifying: but I had the presence of mind to give it an air of ridicule, by saying—You do not understand the true point of gallantry,

ry, gentlemen. You should go to Japan, where one noble-blooded person draws his fabre, and dispatches himself, to prove he is acquainted with the high punctilio and very essence of honour; while another, enraged that he should be in waiting and have a dish to carry up to the emperor's table, requests he would condescend to live till he can come down again, that he may shew he knows what honour is as well as his disingenuous enemy, who had taken such an unfair advantage.

The Count laughed, and Clifton I should hope was not displeased that it was impossible the conversation should again assume the same desperate and absurd tone.

I took an opportunity to ask him privately how he could indulge such intemperate passions; but I was obliged to soften my admonition by all possible mildness. I know not whether I did right, but I even took his hand, pressed it between mine, and requested of him, with an ardour which I think must sink deeply in his mind, to do justice to himself, to

exert those powers of thought which he certainly possessed, and to restrain passions which, if not restrained, must deter me, or any woman worthy of him, from a union that would be so dangerous.

The impression would have been stronger, but that unfortunately his quick sensations took a different turn. Feeling me clasp his hand, he dropped on his knee, and with an ecstasy which he seemed unable to resist kissed both mine, talked something of bliss unutterable, and, recollecting the conclusion of my sentence, added that the very thought of losing me was madness. We were interrupted, and I began to fear lest my true motive should have been misunderstood.

Oh! Louisa, what a world is this! Into what false habits has it fallen! Can hypocrisy be virtue? Can a desire to call forth all the best affections of the heart be misconstrued into something too degrading for expression?

I know not, but I begin to fear that no permanent good can be effected at present,
without

without peril. If so, shall I listen only to my fears; shrink into self; and shun that which duty bids me encounter? No. Though the prejudices of mankind were to overwhelm me with sorrows, for seeking to do good, I will still go on: I will persevere, will accomplish or die.

Yet I know not why I am in this mood! But so I am, and Louisa will forgive me. I talk of sufferings? What have I suffered? What can those who, mature in reason, are superior to prejudice suffer?

But who are they? My prejudices hourly rise up in arms against me. Every day am I obliged to combat what the day before I thought I had destroyed. Could we, at the same moment that we correct our own mistakes, correct those of the whole world, the work were done at once. But we have to struggle and to struggle; and, having to-day shaken off the burs that hung about us, to-morrow we give a glance and perceive them sticking as closely and as thick as ever!

I wish to question Frank, concerning these alarms; but he seems purposely to avoid giving me an opportunity. Perhaps however I am mistaken; and I hope I am. The restless fancy is frequently too full of doubts and fears. Oh, how beautiful is open, artless, undisguised truth! Yet how continually are dissimulation and concealment recommended as virtues! Whatever mistakes, public or private, they may think they have discovered, and however beneficial it might be to correct them, men must not publish their thoughts; for that would be to libel, to defame, to speak or to write scandal!

When will the world learn that the unlimited utterance of all thoughts would be virtuous? How many half-discovered, half-acknowledged truths would then be promulgated; and how immediately would mistake, of every kind, meet its proper antidote! How affectionately and unitedly would men soon be brought to join, not in punishing, nor even in reproving, but in reforming falsehood! Aided and encouraged

raged by your dear and worthy mother, we have often discoursed on these things, Louisa: and the common accidents of life, as well as those peculiar to myself, render such conversations sweet to recollection.

I must conclude: for though we write best when thoughts flow the most freely, yet at present I find myself more inclined to think than to write.

Affectionately and ever

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER XLV.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Chateau de Villebrun.

I KNOW not, Louisa, how to begin ! I have an accident to relate which has alarmed me so much that I am half afraid it should equally alarm my friend. Yet the danger is over, and her sensations cannot equal ours. She can but imagine what they were. But it is so incredible, so mad, so dreadful ! Clifton is strangely rash !

He

He had been for some days dissatisfied, restless, and disturbed. I knew not why, except that I had desired time for mutual consideration, before I would permit him to speak to Sir Arthur. He has half terrified me from ever permitting him to speak—But then he has more than repaired all the wrong he has done. There is something truly magnanimous in his temper, but it has taken a very erroneous bent. The chief subject of my last was the distance which I observed between him and Frank Henley. Little did I know the reason. But I will not anticipate: only remember, be not too much alarmed.

Frank was but one of the actors, though the true and indeed sole hero of the scene I am going to relate. Indeed he is a wonderful, I had almost said a divine youth! It took birth from the Count de Beaunoir.

In my last, I mentioned the strange defiance of the pistols and the handkerchief: and would you think, Louisa, a conversation so frantic could be renewed? It is

true it shewed itself under a new though scarcely a less horrible aspect.

We were yesterday walking in the park, in which there is a remarkable lake, small but romantic. I before spoke I believe of our rowing on it in boats. We were walking beside it on a steep rock, which continues for a considerable length of way to form one of its banks. The Count and Clifton were before: I, Frank Henley, and a party of ladies and gentlemen were following at a little distance, but not near enough to hear the conversation that was passing between your brother and the Count.

It seems the latter had first begun once again to talk of times of knight errantry, and of the feats which the *preux chevaliers* had performed for their ladies. The head-long Clifton, utterly despising the pretended admiration of what he was persuaded the Count durst in no manner imitate, after some sarcastic expressions of his contempt, madly but seriously asked the Count if he durst jump off the rock into the lake,
to

to prove his own courage. Shew your soul, said he, if you have any! Jump you first, said the Count—! *****!

Imagine, Louisa, if you can, the shock I received when, not knowing what had passed, but in an apparent fit of frenzy, I saw him desperately rush to the side of the rock, and dash himself headlong down into the water! It was at an angle, and we had a full view of him falling!

Every soul I believe shrieked, except myself and perhaps Frank Henley. Never had I so much need of the fortitude to which I have endeavoured to habituate my mind.

The gentlemen all ran to the side of the rock.—They saw Clifton, after rising to the surface, sink! He had jumped from a place where the shelving of the rock, under water, by projecting had stunned him as he fell.

Frank perceived the danger, he threw off his hat and coat, and ran to another part, where the height was still more dreadful! Indeed, Louisa, it excites hor-

ror to look at the place ! But he seems to be superior to fear. He plunged down what might well be called an abyfs ; and, after rising for a few seconds to breathe, dived again in search of poor Clifton.

He was twice obliged to rise and take breath. The third time he found him, rose with him, turned him upon his own back, and swam with him a very considerable distance before he could find a place shallow enough to land.

To all appearance Clifton was lifeless ! But the excellent, most excellent when you shall hear all, the heroic Frank immediately applied himself to the remainder of his office. He stayed not a moment to rest, but lifted him a seeming corpse from the earth, threw him once more on his back, and ran faster than any of us to the chateau, carried him up stairs, undressed him himself, put him between the blankets, and gave every necessary order with as much presence of mind as if there had been neither accident nor danger.

Wet

Wet as he was he lost not a thought upon himself.

Never shall I forget the indefatigable assiduity with which he laboured to restore your brother to life; the anxiety which he struggled to conceal; the variety of means he employed; the ingenuity of his conjectures and the humanity of every motion!

Two hours were I and he and all of us held in this dreadful suspense. At last he was successful; and the relief I felt, the load that seemed removed from my heart, it is impossible to describe!

When your brother was perfectly come to himself, Frank suffered him to be bled. For it had been proposed before; but Frank, with a determination that could not be withstood, refused to admit of it; though he had been entreated, and at last openly and loudly blamed, by the surgeon and those who believed in him, for his pertinacity. But Frank was not to be shaken, even by the very serious fear of future accusation. He followed, as he tells me,

the opinion of John Hunter; and well might he think it of more worth than that of the person who pretended to advise. But it requires no common degree of resolution to persist, in this manner, in the right; and wholly to despise calumny and its consequences.

If you think, Louisa, that after this I can add nothing in praise of Frank you are greatly mistaken; for what is to come raises his character almost to an enviable dignity.

Could you imagine that this very Frank Henley, this undaunted, determined, high-souled Frank, who had flung himself down the horrid precipice after your brother, who had swum with him, run with him, risked being supposed in some sort his murderer, and at last restored him to life, had the very day before received from the hand of this same brother—a blow!—If, Louisa, there be one being upon earth capable of attaining virtues more than human, it is surely Frank Henley!

Much praise however, as well as blame,

is

is justly due to Clifton. I never saw a heart more painfully wrung, by the sense of an injury committed and of a good so unexampled received, as his has been. It was he who told of his own behaviour.—His total want of power to make retribution is the theme by which he is pained and oppressed.

Frank, uniform in generosity, disclaims any superiority, and affirms Clifton would have done the same, had he been in the same danger. I think I would, answered Clifton, in a tone that shewed he felt what he spoke: but I know myself too well to suppose I should have so unremittingly persevered, like you, in the performance of an office of humanity which seemed hopeless.

The distinction was just, disinterested, and worthy the discernment of a mind like that of your brother.

Clifton says that, though he cannot think like Frank, [We hope to make him, Louisa.] yet he cannot but admire the magnanimity

magnanimity with which he acts up to his principles, and proves his sincerity.

Oh, my friend! You can conceive all the terrors of the scene! So fine a youth, so accomplished, so brave, the brother of my Louisa, brought to Paris to meet an untimely death! I the cause of his coming thither! I the innocent instigator of this last rash act! The eyes of all upon me! The horror of suspense!—It was indeed a trial!

Yet who knows what accidents may occur in life? Who can sufficiently cherish fortitude: and by anticipating defy misfortune? Violently as my feelings were assaulted, there yet may be, there are, shocks more violent, scenes more dreadful in the world. Nor is it impossible but that such may be my lot. And if they were, I hope I still should bear up against them all.

It is true I may not always have a Frank Henley to cherish and inspire hope. His constant theme was—"He is not dead!" And I once heard him murmuring to himself,

self, with a kind of prophetic energy—"He shall not die!"—It was this *shall not* by which he was saved: for, with any other creature upon earth, I am persuaded he had been gone for ever. Oh this noble perseverance! It is indeed a godlike virtue!

The Count is less in spirits, less extravagant, since this accident. It seems to hang upon his mind, as if he had been out-braved. His anxiety, as might well be expected from such a temper, was excessive, while Clifton was in danger: but he seems to repent now, that he did not follow the mad example. *Parbleu! Madame, je suis Provençal; on dit que j'ai la tête un peu chaude; mais Messieurs les Anglois vont diablement vite aux épreuves! Mes compatriotes même ne sont pas si fous! —Je ne ne suis pas content de moi—J'aurais du faire le saut—J'aurais sauvé la vie à mon rival!—Voilà une belle occasion manquée, et beaucoup de gloire à jamais perdue pour moi! **

My

* 'Sdeath! Madam, I am a native of Provence, and they tell me I am a little crazy; but these Englishmen

My mind at present is not entirely tranquil. The recollection of a temper so rash as Clifton's preys upon me. Yet, where there are qualities so high, and powers so uncommon, shall I despair? Shall I shrink from an act of duty? It is a task I have prescribed to myself. Shall I witness the fortitude of Frank, and be myself so easily discomfited? No, Louisa. Clifton shall be ours——*Shall be!*——Shall be the brother of Louisa, the Friend of Frank, and the better part of Anna. Yes, I too will be determined! I like Frank will say——“He is not dead! He shall not die!”

A. W. ST. IVES.

are in a confounded hurry to come to the proof!—My own countrymen are less lunatic!——I am not satisfied with myself. I ought to have leaped after him: I should have saved the life of my rival! It was losing a glorious opportunity; and I have robbed myself of thus much fame for ever!

LETTER

LETTER XLVI.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. CLIFTON

TO

FRANK HENLEY.

Rest Bank.

SIR,

IF the praises, prayers, and thanks of a woman whom disease has robbed of more than half her faculties, could be of any value, if the overflowing heart of a mother could but speak its throbs, if admiration of gifts so astonishing and virtues so divine could be worthy your acceptance, or could reward you for all the good you have done us, I would endeavour to discharge the unexampled and unmerited obligation.

But

But no, sir; you are superior to these. I write not for your sake, but for my own; that I may endeavour to relieve myself of sensations that oppress me: I feel it incumbent on me to write; yet what can I say? I have no words. I despair of any opportunity of retribution: I am aged, infirm, and feeble. I am going down to the grave; but still I have life enough to revive and feel a new existence, at the recital of your virtues!

Forgive this short effusion, from the exuberant heart of a mother, who wishes but is wholly unable to say how much she admires you.

M. CLIFTON.

LETTER

LETTER XLVII.

LOUISA CLIFTON

TO

FRANK HENLEY.

Rest-Bank.

SIR,

I, LIKE my dear mamma, am impelled to endeavour to return thanks for benefits, at the recollection of which the heart sinks, and all thanks become inadequate and vain. Yet suffer a sister's thanks for a brother spared, pardoned, and restored to life! Restored at the hazard of your own, and after a mortal affront received! Restored by the energies of fortitude, sagacity, and affection!

Indeed, sir, I cannot tell you what I feel. It is utterly impossible. Imagine
me

me your friend, your sister. Command my life, it is yours. Yours not so much because the youth you have saved happened to be my brother, as for the true esteem I have for qualities so exalted. This is not the first time you have excited my admiration, and permit me to add my love.— Your heart is too noble to misunderstand me. I love virtue, in man or woman; and if that be sin may I be ever sinful!

I would wish you the joys of heaven, but my wishes are vain; you have them already: nor can a mind like yours be robbed of them, by all the powers of man or accident.

L. CLIFTON.

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

LOUISA CLIFTON

TO

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES.

Rose-Bank.

YOUR three last letters, my dear Anna, have affected me in a very uncommon manner. The pure passion, the noble resignation, and the fortitude of Frank Henley are unparalleled. Not to admire, not to esteem, not to love such virtues is impossible. His unshaken patience, his generosity, his forgiveness, his courage, his perseverance, are inimitable proofs of his superiority. Who can forbear wishing him success? Ought he not to command it; to say it is mine; truth and justice dare not deny it to me?

Indeed,

Indeed, Anna, my mind is strangely in doubt. To be guilty of injustice to such worth is surely no common guilt. And yet my brother—~~Headlong~~ lunatic! whose intemperance is every moment hurrying him into extremes.—I grant, my friend, his mind is worthy of being retrieved; and it is a generous, a noble enterprize. Nay I own I sometimes persuade myself it cannot fail, when Anna St. Ives and Frank Henley, from motives so pure and with so much determination, engage in the cause. But at others, I see peril at every step! I find my heart reproaching me for not adjuring my friend to desist; for not exciting her to bestow her hand on the man who of all others can most justly claim it, as his right.

That I desire to see my brother all that emulation and wisdom could make him, the friend and husband of my Anna, the rival of her virtues, and the bosom intimate of him whom she is willing to forego for this brother's sake; that I desire this, ardently, vehemently, is most true. If the
end

end be attainable, it is a noble enterprize. But the difficulties! What are they? Have they been well examined?—I, with my Anna, say mind can do all things with mind: truth is irresistible, and must finally conquer. But it has many modes of conquering, and some of them are tragical and dreadful.

To see my Anna married to strife, wasting her fine powers to reform habits which, though they may be checked, may perhaps be too deep ever to be eradicated; to see all her exquisite sensibilities hourly preyed upon by inefficient attempts to do good, for which instead of praise and love, she might meet neglect, reproach, or perhaps stern insult—Oh! it is a painful thought! She would not pine; she would not weakly sink into dejection, and desert her duties, in pity to her own misfortunes.—No—But still it is an unhappy, nay, it is an abhorred state.

I am bewildered. One train of reasoning overturns another, and I know not what to advise. There are times in which
these

these consequences appear most probable ; and there are others in which I say no, it is impossible ! Brutality itself could not be so senseless, so destructive of its own felicity ! Anna St. Ives would win a savage heart ! And my brother evidently has quick and delicate sensations ; capable of great good. But then are they not capable of great harm ? Yes : but are they, would they be capable of harm with her ? Would not she command them, regulate them, harmonize them ? Again, and again, I know not.

One thing however let me add. Let me conjure the friend of my bosom not to suffer herself to be swayed, by the remembrance of that friendship. Nay, if she do not feel a certainty of success, let me intreat, let me admonish her to desist, before it be too late ; and before further encouragement shall seem to authorize the presuming Clifton, for presuming I am convinced he will be, to found claims upon her kindness.

Oh

Oh that he were indeed worthy of her ! Would that he could but rise to something like that enviable dignity ? And can he not ?—Indeed I would not plead against him ; but neither would I be instrumental in rendering my friend, who is surely born a blessing to the earth, miserable.

I am angry with myself for my own indecision : but in vain ; I have no remedy. I sometimes conclude this indecision ought to act as a warning, and for that reason I have painted my feelings as they are. If yours should resemble them, I firmly and loudly say—Anna, desist ! If not, I then have no advice to give. For this I blame myself, but ineffectually.

Be assured however that, under all circumstances of future life, be they adverse or prosperous, my best wishes will be with you, and my heart and soul ever yours.

L. CLIFTON.

P. S. My mamma and I have mutually written to Frank Henley : you may easily

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I

imagine

imagine in what tone and style. But I could wish my brother to see our letters. We have both thought it best to forbear writing to him, his temper being wayward and tetchy. We would much rather he should be obliged to feel, indirectly, what our opinions and sensations are, than learn them from any formal address, which he is so liable to misconstrue. It is most probable that Frank will not mention these letters. But if you shew him this, and being of my opinion will join in the request, I have no doubt he will then comply. There is one sentence in my letter which makes me likewise wish that Clifton should know I have requested Frank would permit him to see what I have written; otherwise that sentence might very probably by him be misinterpreted. When you read the letter, you will instantly know which I mean; the word love makes it conspicuous; and you will then perceive my reason. To raise the mind, which is habituated to the suspicious practices of the world, above those practices, and to
make

make it feel that the pure heart defies the pusillanimous imputation of want of delicacy, is a difficult task. But let us, my Anna, continue to act and speak all that our thoughts approve, void of the fear of accusation.

LETTER XLIX.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

WE are returned to Paris. The Marquis and his bride have taken leave of their country pleasures, and are gone to Fontainebleau, to be presented at court.

The strange incident of Clifton excited much conversation, in which my name and his were frequently joined. The Count de Beaunoir became less particular in his behaviour to me, in consequence of the reserve which I thought it right to assume. I find however that he told Sir Arthur,

Arthur, after running over a great number of enthusiastic epithets, in his wild way, all in my praise, that he perceived at present I preferred another; and that he had too high a sense of honour to put any restraint on a lady's inclinations. But if my mind should change, and his person, fortune, sword, and life could give me pleasure, they should eternally be at my command. He likewise means in a few days to follow the court to Fontainebleau, as he said; and he again repeated he had lost a fine opportunity of convincing me how he adored me, and that he was *diablement fâché*.

Clifton has entirely altered his behaviour to Frank; he now treats him with unaffected freedom and respect. But his impatience relative to me has not abated. To-morrow we are to have some conversation, after which I imagine he wishes to make proposals to Sir Arthur.

Would you think, Louisa, that I sometimes suffer myself to be surprised into fears; and that I then find myself ready to retract,

retract, or at least questioning whether I ought to proceed.

There is something fatally erroneous in the impatient propensities of the human mind. How seldom does it stay so fully to examine a question as to leave no remaining doubt, and to act on a preconcerted and consistent plan! Yet it never acts with safety or with satisfaction, except when it has or imagines it has made this examination. If our motives be few, slow, and feeble, we then are heavy, dull, and stupid: if they be quick, numerous, and strong, we are too apt implicitly to obey first impulses, and to hurry headlong into folly and extravagance. Yet these last only can give energy; and, having them, wisdom will consist in being able to curb them, so as to give full time for consideration.

The conscious want of this in myself is what I blame. How often am I surprised by unexpected circumstances, which I ought to have foreseen, and against which I ought to have provided! If I have any doubts

doubts of myself, if I am not certain of producing those effects on the mind of Clifton which I know I ought to be able to produce, it becomes me to recede. Or rather it becomes me to apply myself, with the resolution of which I am so ready to vaunt, to attain that which is attainable, to discover the true means, the clue to his mind, and to persevere.

I have sometimes suspected myself of being influenced by his fine form, and the charms of his wit and gaiety. At others I have even doubted whether I were not more actuated by an affection for my Louisa, than by a sense of incumbent duty. But, consider the subject how I will, that there is a duty, and that I am called upon to fulfil it, is an unerring decision.

There must be no concealment. I must explain my whole chain of reasonings to him: for nothing appears more indubitable to me than that duplicity never can conduce to good. The only fear is that I should be deficient in my detail, and present my plan so as to give it a false appearance.

pearance. Truth partially told becomes falsehood : and it was a kind of blind consciousness of this which first induced men to countenance dissimulation. They felt their inability to do justice to truth, and therefore concluded hypocrisy was a virtue, and, strange to tell, truth itself sometimes a vice. It was a lamentable mistake. It is partial truth, or in other words falsehood, which is the vice.

Clifton has from the beginning been a great favourite with Sir Arthur. He contradicts none of my father's prejudices ; he admires grounds and parks beautifully laid out ; has a taste for architecture ; points out the defects and excellencies of the buildings of France with much discrimination ; has a great respect, like Sir Arthur, for family, and prides himself in being the son of an honourable mother ; recounts, in a pleasant and lively manner, the anecdotes he has heard ; and relates his own adventures, so as to render them amusing. There is therefore no fear of opposition from Sir Arthur.

He

He has another advantage with the family. My uncle, Lord Fitz-Allen, is at present in Paris, on his return from Switzerland, and Clifton has been introduced to him by his kinsman, Lord Evelyn, who is making a short excursion to the south of France. The near relationship of your brother to this noble lord has given him great consequence with my uncle, who has once more condescended to restore me to favour. Could I or did it become me entirely to conceal those feelings which his arrogance inspires, I should stand much higher in his esteem. As it is, he acts more from the love of his rank and family, that is of himself, than of me; and has accordingly signified his mandatory approbation to Sir Arthur. As nothing however in the way of family advantage is to be expected from him, he having several children and a prodigious quantity of dignity to maintain, his behest is not altogether so omnipotent as it might otherwise be.

My brother, agreeably to his grandfather's will, has taken possession of the

Edgemoor estate, which is eight hundred a year. This I imagine will oblige Sir Arthur, in despite of his predilection, to retrench some of his improving expences. He mentioned the circumstance to me, and I thought that a good opportunity once more to attack his ruling passion. Our conversation soon became animated. I boldly descanted on the use and abuse of riches, on the claims of honest distress, and on the turpitude of seeking self-gratifications, and neglecting to promote the great ends for which men ought to live; the spreading of truth, the rewarding of genius, and the propagation of mind.

But it was to little purpose. Sir Arthur did not understand me; and I was more angry at myself than at him, as well I might be, for wanting the power to render myself intelligible. He as usual was amazed to hear he had not a right to do what he pleased with his own, and to be told it was not his own. Nor was he sparing in pettish reproof to the self-sufficient young lady, who thought proper to dispute

dispute the propriety and wisdom of his projects.

The question that continually occurs to me is, when shall those beings who justly claim superiority of understanding, and thence a right to direct the world, find some simple and easy mode of convincing the mistaken, and by conviction of eradicating error?

Adieu. Blessings be with you. I shall most probably write by the next post, for I wish you to be as perfectly acquainted as possible with every thing that passes, that I may profit by the advice of a friend so dear, so true, and so discerning.

A. W. ST. IVES.

P. S. Your last letter is this moment come to hand, and has strongly revived trains of ideas that of late have repeatedly passed through my own mind. It confirms me in the resolution of being very sincere with your brother. But, unless my sincerity should so far offend him, as to

induce him voluntarily to recede, it likewise shews me it is my duty to persist. At least such is the result of all the arguments I hold with myself, whenever the subject presents itself to me, either through the medium of my own imagination, or pictured by others. I will write soon. I approve the reasoning in your postscript, will shew it to Frank, and will ask him to let me and Clifton see the letters, who shall likewise know it is by your desire.

LETTER

LETTER L.

SIR ARTHUR ST. IVES

TO

ABIMELECH HENLEY.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

I HAVE received yours of the 30th ult.* honest Aby, and it gave me great pleasure to hear you had made so much dispatch. Wenbourne-Hill is the garden of Eden. The more I see, the more I am convinced. What is there here to be compared to my temples, and my groves, and my glades? Here a mount and a shrubbery! There a dell concealed by

* Omitted.

brambles!

brambles! On your right a statue! On your left an obelisk, and a sun-dial! The obelisk is fixed, yet the dial shews that time is ever flying. Did you ever think of that before, Aby?

Apropos of this dial: Sir Alexander I remember said it was useless half the day; because it was shaded from the sun to the west and the north, by the old grove. His advice was that the grove should be grubbed up; but it certainly would be much easier to remove the sun-dial, obelisk, and all.

I am so delighted with the recollection of these things, Abimelech, that I had half forgotten the reason of my writing to you. The subject is disagreeable enough; and I should not be sorry if I were never to remember it more.

I very much fear we must stop our improvements. My son has claimed and entered upon the Edgemoor estate. I thought myself sure that he would remain satisfied as he was till my death. What could be more reasonable? I argued with him to
the

the very utmost, but to no purpose. He is in great haste to set up for himself; and I don't know whether he would not eject me out of Wenbourne-Hill, if he had the power. In vain did I tell him that his pay in the guards, added to the three hundred a-year which I had before allowed him, was more than any young man knew how properly to spend. He has only himself to think of, and he very positively declares he never means to have a family, for he will never marry. I believe he is quite serious in his declaration: and if so, what does he want with an estate of eight hundred a-year? He ought to consider that; and to remember that a provision must be made for his sister. But no; he considers only himself.

Indeed I hear but an indifferent account of him: he is a fashionable gentleman, and would rather squander his money at the gaming-table, than suffer it to remain in the family. He has been a wild youth. I have sometimes wondered where he got all the money which I am told he has spent.

spent. Not from me I am sure. And though I have often heard of his deep play, I do not remember to have ever heard of his winning. But he follows his own course. My arguments, that I had the family dignity to support, his sister to marry, and mortgages to pay off, were all in vain.

He was equally deaf when I pleaded the improvements that I was making; all for his sake. For you know, Aby, he is to have them when I am gone: and go I must, some time or another.

He had even the confidence to tell me that, if Wenbourne-Hill were his, he would quickly undo every thing that I have been doing.

Is not this a sad thing, Aby? For what have I been labouring? Have not we both spent our lives in contriving? How many charming thoughts have we had! What pleasure have we taken in planting and pulling up, digging and scattering, watering and draining, turving and gravelling!

Talking

Talking of water, Aby, I cannot forbear mentioning a most delightfully romantic lake, which I have met with in the park of the Marquis de Villebrun. It is the only thing, in the laying out of grounds, that I have seen to please me in all France. One part of it a fine level: such a sweep! At the other extremity nothing but rocks and precipices. Your son Frank threw himself headlong down one of them, into the water, to save a gentleman's life. Were you but to see it, you would be astonished. They have called it the Englishman's leap. I would not do such a thing for a million of money. I should be dead enough if I did.

But Frank is a bold young man, and I assure you, Aby, highly esteemed by my daughter; ay and by myself too, and by every body: very highly indeed. He was the whole talk for I know not how many days.

But about this money, Aby. I shall soon want a good round sum, if I am not mistaken. I may venture, Aby, to give
you

you a hint that I expect very soon, indeed I don't know how soon, a proposal should be made to me for my daughter: and if it be, I am so pleased with the party, who let me tell you is a fine spirited young fellow, that I assure you I shall not think of refusing my consent; especially as he is so much in the good graces of my daughter. In this case, I cannot do less than pay twenty thousand pounds down.

I am afraid, honest Aby, we must renounce the wilderness! But when you know the party, I think you will allow I could not act otherwise.

Indeed, I find, however we may please ourselves, we can never satisfy our children. Here too has Anna been lecturing me, about money thrown away, as she is pleased to conceive; and has said a great deal indeed, against what I thought could not have been found fault with.—

But so it is! Friends, relations, children, all are wiser than ourselves! All are ready enough to discover or to suppose blemishes! Would you think it possible for any body
to

to be acquainted with Wenbourne-Hill and do any thing but admire? My hope, nay my determination was to have made it the paradise of England, and to have drawn strangers far and near to come and be delighted with its beauties. But these rubs and crosses put one out of heart with the most excellent thoughts and contrivances.

Let me know what you think can be done in these money matters, if things should be as I expect. You are perfectly acquainted with the state of my affairs. I see no way but that of mortgaging more deeply.

It is exceedingly vexatious to think of stopping our proceedings, Aby. But what can be done? However, as I do not intend to stay much longer here, we can talk more to the purpose on these matters when we meet in England.

Perhaps it would be better to begin by discharging the workmen gradually; which you will find proper opportunities to do, Aby. And if you were, by way of talk
in

in the neighbourhood, to say that you thought nothing more could be done to Wenbourne-Hill, and that you had reason to believe that was my opinion likewise, such a report might tie the tongues of cavillers: for I would not have it thought we stop for want of money.

You may write to me here, in answer to this; for we shall not leave Paris before your letter will come to hand. And so, good Abimelech, farewell.

A. ST. IVES.

P. S. I will not tell you the name of the party from whom I expect the proposal, honest Aby; because if he should be shy of speaking, as youngsters sometimes are, it might come to nothing; but I may hint to you, that you are well acquainted with his family; and I dare say you will not be sorry for the match; it being so agreeable to my daughter's inclination; though I grant it may not be so good a one as my sister Wenbourne, and others of the family, have

have been expecting; because of Anna's beauty and accomplishments, which I own might well merit a man of higher birth and fortune. But the little hussy has been so nice, and squeamish, that I began to fear she would take up her silly spendthrift brother's whim, and determine to live single: therefore I shall not balk her, now she seems in the humour.

LETTER LI.

ABIMELECH HENLEY

TO

FRANK HENLEY.

Wenbourne-Hill.

WHY ay! To be sure! This will do! I shall be fain to think a summit of ee, now you can flamgudgin 'em a thisn. I didn't a think it was innee. Why you will become a son of my own begettin. I write to tellee the good news, and that ee mightn't a kick down the milk. You have a sifflicated Sir Arthur. I could a told ee afore that you had a sifflicated Missiee. But I was afeard as that you wur a too adasht. But I tellee it will do! Father's own lad!

An ear-tickler! Ay, ay! That's the trade!
Sugar the fauce, and it goes down glibly.

Listen to me. I a learnt the secret on't.
What was I, I pray you? Pennylefs Aby!
Wet and weary! And what am I now?
A tell me that. Why I'm a worth—But
that's neither here nor there, I tellee.—
And what may you be an you please?
What should I a bin, an I ad had your
settins out? Why Ide a bin what Ide a
pleased. A dooke, mayhap; or a lord
mayor of Lunnun? — No — A sekittary
prime minifter?—No—A member of par-
liament? — No—Ide a bin treasurer!—
Treasurer of the three kinkdums. Ide a
handled the kole!—I've a feathered my
nest as it is; and what would I a done
then thinkee?

Stick close to Sir Arthur. Mind your
hits, and you have him a safe enough.—
Didn't I always tellee you must catch 'n
by the ear? A cunnin curr always catches
a pig by the ear. He expects a proposal
for Missie; he dows not a know how soon.
And who does he expect to propose?

Guess,

Guefs, Nicodemus, if you can. Do you mind me? He shan't refuse his consent. Mark you me that! They are his own words. Twenty thousand pounds down! His own words again. What do you say to me now? It's all your own! I mean it's all *our* own—Do you mind me? For who have you to thank for it? I tellee it is but ask and have—And how do I know that?—What's that to you, Dolt?—No, no—You are a no dolt now—You are a good lad.

I tellee I'm in the secret! So do you flamdazzle Miffie. I a heard of your jumpins and swimmins; and so that you do but swim to the main chance, why ay! That's a summit! I a bin to Clifton-Hall. For why? I begind to smell a rat! And there I talked with t'other Miffie. I a palavered her over. I a ferretted and a feagued and a worked and a wormed it all out of she. Your name is up! You may go to bed! Do you mind me? You may go to bed to twenty thousand pounds! It is as good as all your own.

I am

I am a to find the kole : that is, I first havin and holdin the wherewithalls, and the whys, and the wherefores. And so do you see me, I expect to have the handlin ont—But that's a nether here nor there. Sir Arthur as good as said it to me—So don't a stand like a Gabriel Gallymaufry all a mort, shilly shally, I would if I durst—A dip in the skimmin dish and a lick of the finger—That's a not the way with a maiden—What! A don't I know?—Make up to Missie, and say to her, Missie! Here am I! My name is Frank Henley! My father's name is Abimelech Henley! A's a cunnin warm old codger—A tell her that—And says you, here Missie says you am I, at your onnurable Ladyship's reverend sarvice. My father has a got the rhino—A don't forget to tell her that—smug and snug and all go snacks—Do you mind me? And so, says you, I have a paradventered umbelly to speak my foolish thofts, says you. That is take me rightly, your Ladyship, says you; under your Ladyship's purtection and currection,

and every think of that there umbel and very submissive obedient kind, says you. And so says you, do ee fee me Missfee, I onnurs and glorifies your Ladyship; and am ready to have and to hold, says you; go fairly go fouly, be happy be lucky, any day o'the week, says you; I and my father, honest Aby, says you. He can raise the wind, says you! He can find the wherewithalls to pay for lawyer's parchement, says you——But mind, that's a nether here nor there——So a here Missfee stands I, says you; I and my honest old father——A's got the marygolds, says you! The gilly flowers, the yellow boys, says you! Golore!——But that's a nether here nor there.

So do you tell her all a that I bid ee, and a mind your pees and cues. Who knows but Wenbourne-Hill itself may be one day all our own? I say who knows? There be old fools and young fools—I tellee that——Old planners, and improvers, and bite bubbles; and young squitter squanders, gamblers, and chouse chits——

Mark

Mark you me that—And there be wax and parchment too—Ay and post obits *; and besides all doosfoors and perkiffits. A what is money good for but to make money? A tell me that.

And so in the name and the lovin kindness of the mercifool sufferins of almighty goodness, and peace and glory and heavenly joys, no more at present,

ABIMELECH HENLEY.

* The original reads---postt-off bites. The context suggested post obits, which reading is confirmed by succeeding letters. The syllable *bite* might very naturally, in the mind of honest Aby, be changed into *bites*. Dates have for certain reasons been omitted; but, from this and other passages, we may perceive that the date of this correspondence is antecedent to the bill for protecting minors against usury.

LETTER LII.

ABIMELECH HENLEY

TO

SIR ARTHUR ST. IVES.

Wenbourne-Hill.

Most onnurable Sir, my ever onnurd Master,

FOR certainly your noble onnur knows best. And thof I have paradventerd, now and tan, umbelly to speak my foolish thofts, and haply may again a paradventer, when your most exceptionable onnur shall glorify me with a hearing, in fitch and fitch like cramp cafes and queerums as this here; yet take me ritely, your noble onnur, it is always and evermore with every think of that

that there umbel and very submissive obedient kind.

My younk Lady Miffie is as elegunt a my Lady younk Miffie as any in the three kink's kinkdums. A who can gain say it? She is the flour of the flock, I must a say that. The whole country says it? For why, as aforefaid, a who can gain say it? A tell me that! Always a favin and exceptin your noble onnur, as in rite and duty boundin. What, your most gracious onnur, a hannot I had the glory and the magniffunce to dangle her in my arms, before she was a three months old? A hannot I a known her from the hour of her birth? Nay, as a I may say, afore her blessed peepers a twinkled the glory everlastin of infinit mercifool commiseration and sun-shine? A didn't I bob her here, and bob her there; a up and a down, aback and afore, and about, with a sweet gracious a krow and a kifs for honest poor Aby, as your onnur and your onnurable Madam, my Lady, ever gracious to me a poor sinner used then to call me?

Not but those times are a pafst. But, a favin and exceptin your noble onnur, that's a nether here nor there. I may hold up my head as well as another. A why not? When fo be as a man has no money, why then, a favin and exceptin your onnur's reverence, a's but a poor dog. But when fo be as a man as a got the rhino, why then a may begin to hold up his head. A why not? Always a favin and exceptin your noble onnur, as afore-said.

Your noble onnur knows that I'm a be apt to let my tongue mag a little, when my wits be fet a gaddin; and whereupon the case is as witch your noble onnur was pleased to fifflicate me upon, in your last rite onnurable and mereifool letter. For why? A man's son as I may say is himself; and twenty thousand pounds, thof it be not a penny too much, is somethink. For witch the bleffin and glory of goodness and praise be with the donors. Nevertheless that there will likewise be the wherewithalls, mayhap, notwithstandin, when

when my head comes to be laid low, Thof if fo be I cannot but fay that a man would rather a not think of that there, if a could help it. A favin and exceptin that the bleffin and glory and power and praise of the saints, and the martyrs, and the profits, and the cherubims and ferafims, and the amen allelujahs, might a be summut to a dyin foul; when a has had, god be mercifool unto us, time for repentance, and the washin away of the fins of this wickedness world, by good deeds, and charity, and mercy, and lovin kindness unto all men; when the poor miserable finner, with groans, and tears, and eternal terrifyins of the flamin prince Lucifer Bezebub of darkness everlastin is at last obliged to take leave of the soul from the body. Ah, a well a day! Man is a reprobation race! A's a given over to sin, and to shame, and to backfidins, and to the slough of despond, and to the valley of the shaddow of death, and if a has not, miserable finner, a time to repent, of a

witch be evermore granted unto us all, world without end. Amen! Amen!

Ah, dear a me, what have I bin talkin to your most gracious onnur? I was a meant to tell your noble onnur that the twenty thousand pounds mayhap might a be forth cummin; on proper occasions, and certificates, and securities, and doofoors, and perkissits; all of the witch, as my ever onnurd master aforetime knows, there is no a doin a business without. For why?—Money is money, and land is land; and there be troubles, and takins, and seekins, and enquirins, and profit and loss, and ifs and mayhaps, and all a that there; of the witch there is no a doing without. But nevertheless I dares to say, likewise and notwithstanding as aforesaid, that the money may be a forth cummin.

Nay and if so be the witch that I might a paradventer to advise, but that to be sure I should not like to have it a thoft that I should perk and put in my oar, all agog to my betters, and moreover one of his majesty's baronets, otherwise I should say nevertheless

vertheless as aforesaid that the young lady is the flour of the flock; and if so be as I had the onnurable grace and bleffin to be her father, I would give her and a make over to her, now and evermore hereafter, all a that the law would a let me. And a let 'em tell me, your noble onnur, who desarves it better. What! Is n't she, as I may say, the firmament of the power and glory of praise? What is ivory and alabaster a parallel to her? Let 'em a tell me that! If I wus the onnurable father of sitch ever mercifool affability, would a not I be fain to give her gems and rubies, and carbuncles, if I had 'em? Who should gain say me? A savin and exceptin your ever exceptionable and noble onnur. I would n't a be meant to be thoft to put in a word for meself, by no manner of account; no, no; far be it from me; but in other partikillers, if so be that it wus me meself, I should n't a grutch her kinkdums. And ast to thwartin and knatterin and crossin the kindly sweet virginal soul, ever blessed as she is, in love, for what truly?

Your noble onnur has too much bowels of fatherly miseration. No, no !—Your noble onnur, has a clencht it ; take her now she is in the humour. Whereby maidens be wayward and fain and froward and full of skittish tricks, when they be happen to be crossed in love. Take her in the humour your wife and alwise noble onnur.

Whereof your onnur was a menshinnin a stagnation to be put in the spoke of the wheel of improvements. Whereof if I might a paradventer to put in my oar, I should say why that should be as it might a be happen. When if as I should ever live to see the glorious day of this marriage match rejoice the heart of Wenbourne-Hill, why then I should know how to speak my poor thofts. For why ? All would then be clear and above board ; and we should all a know who and who was together. That would be summut ! We might then a be happen to raise the wind ; and the wherewithalls might a be forth cummin.

And

And so, as matters and thinks is likely to turn out, to be sure I must say that your onnur has a hit the nail on the head. Whereof as your onnur has a ushered your commands, I shall begin to take care of the kole, and send them there rapscallions a packin.

And as to the flickers and fleers of the neighbours, your onnurable onnur, a leave me to humdudgin they. I'll a send their wits a wool-gatherin. For why? Your onnurable onnur has always a had my lovin kindness of bleffins of praise, as in duty boundin. For certainly I should be fain to praise the bridge that a carries me safe over. And now that your onnur is a thinkin of a more of lovin kindness and mercies, to me and mine, why a what should I say now? Why I should say and should glorify, to all the world, that your onnur is my ever onnured and rite most mercifool bountifool faithfool and disrespectfool kind master; and that I be your ever rite and most trusty true honest Aby; and every think of that there umbel and

very submissive obedient kind, as in duty boundin.

But I a bin a thinkin, your ever gracious onnur, that a behap the kintlin may stand alooft, a hang * * * * *, and a be a-dasht. And a what is to be done then? Why then, whereupon if that your ever gracious onnur would but be so all merci-fool in goodness as to say the word, why we should be upon sure ground, and all our quips and quandaries and afterclaps would a be chouse cliket. I most umbelly pray and besiege your onnur to be so mercifool as to think o' that there! Do ee, your ever gracious onnur! I pray your onnur, doo ee! Then we should a be all sound and safe over, and it would all a be holiday at Wenbourne-Hill! A that would be a glorified day! The lawjus mighty, ay! It would!

Witch is all in praise and onnur of the glory and peace to come, thanksgivin and gladness; umbelly beggin leave to super scribe me self,

ABIMELECH HENLEY.

I needn't

I needn't a say nothink of a concernin of a dockin of the entail, to your onnur. For why? As your onnur knows, nothink can be done, in the way of the kole and wherewithalls, without a that there. But ast for that, a that argues nothink. For why? His younk onnur, I knows, will be a willin enough; that is, settin the case of a proviso of a doosoor consideration in ready rhino for himself. A told me himself, his younk onnur, that a will have that. A says a will sell his chance, and a does n't a care how soon; but a wonnot give it away. Witch if so be as it be not to be helpt, why a what be to be done, your onnur?

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

YOUR brother has this moment left me. Our conversation has been animated; and, as usual, I sit down to commit what has passed to paper, while it is fresh on my memory.

He began with the warmest expressions of the force of his passion. I have no reason to doubt of their sincerity; and, if affection can be productive of the end which I hope, its strength ought to give me pleasure. He would scarcely suffer me to suppose it possible there could be any cause
of

of difference between us : let me but name my conditions and they should be fulfilled. He would undertake all that I did, all that I could require ; and it was with difficulty that I could persuade him of the possibility of promising too fast. This introduced what was most material in our dialogue.

My heart assures me, madam, said he, that I never gave you the least cause to suspect the sincerity and ardour of my passion : and I should hope that the fears, which I have sometimes thought you too readily entertained, are now dissipated.

My fears are chiefly for, or rather of, myself. I doubt whether any person has so high an opinion of the powers and energy of your mind as I have : but I think those powers ill directed, and in danger of being lost.

I own, madam, I have been sometimes grieved, nay piqued, to perceive that you do not always think quite so well of me as I could wish.

You

You wrong me. You yourself do not think so highly of yourself as I do.

Yet you suppose me to be in danger? Of being misled. Some of my opinions and principles, or some of yours, are erroneous, for they differ; I cannot at this moment but perceive how liable I am to be misunderstood. I cannot be insensible of the awkwardness of the situation in which I now place myself. My age, my sex, the customs of the world, a thousand circumstances contribute to cast an air of ridicule upon what ought to be very serious. But I must persist. Do you endeavour to forget these circumstances; and consider only the words, not the girl by whom they are spoken.

It is not you, madam, but I who ought to dread appearing ridiculous. But for your sake—Let me but obtain your favour and make me as ridiculous as you please.

I told you so!—Should the lordly lettered man submit to have his principles questioned,

questioned, by an untutored woman? Be sincere: your mind revolts at it?

I feel the justness of your satire. Men are tyrants.

Prejudice is a tyrant: there is no other tyranny.

Madam!

That is one of my strange opinions.

It may be true; I am willing to think it is. Such things are indifferent to me. Let me but have your consent, to speak to Sir Arthur, and I have accomplished all I wish. I do not desire to trouble myself with examining opinions, true or false. I am determined to be of your opinion, be it what it will.

That is, you avow that the gratification of your desires is the chief pursuit of your life. We have now found the essential point on which we differ.

Is not happiness, madam, the universal pursuit? Must it not, ought it not to be?

Yes. But the grand distinction is between general and individual happiness. The happiness that centres in the good of
the

the whole may for the present find momentary interruption, but never can be long subverted: while that individual happiness, of which almost the whole world is in pursuit, is continually blundering, mistaking its object, losing its road, and ending in disappointment.

Then, madam, we must all turn monks, preach self-denial, fast, pray, scourge away our sins, live groaning, and die grieving.

[I smiled. It is his usual way, when he thinks I am got a little in the clouds, to draw some humorous or satirical picture, to bring me down to what he esteems common-sense. But, as I am convinced that the truth only need to be repeated, and insisted on, whenever there is an opportunity, in order finally to be received, the best way is always to join in the laugh, which is inoffensive, unless pettishness give it a sting.]

You find yourself obliged at present to consider me as a whimsical girl, with a certain flow of spirits, and much vanity, desiring

desiring to distinguish herself by singularity?

No, madam. Whatever you may think of me, my heart will not endure a thought to your disadvantage.

Nay, nay, forbear your kind reproaches. Every time you differ with me in sentiment, you cannot but think something to my disadvantage. It is so with all of us. The very end of this present explanation is sincerity. We each think well of the other: but do we think sufficiently well? Is there a certainty that our thoughts are in no danger of changing? Of all the actions of private life, there is not one so solemn as that of vowing perpetual love: yet the heedless levity with which it is daily performed, proves that there is scarcely one on which less serious reflection is bestowed. Can we be too careful not to deceive ourselves? Ought we not minutely to examine our hopes and expectations? Ought not you and I, in particular, to be circumspect? Our imaginations are vivid, our feelings strong,
our

our views and desires not bounded by common rules. In such minds, passions, if not subdued, become ungovernable, and fatal.

I am very conscious, madam—

Nay, do not fancy I seek to accuse:—my purpose is very different. My mind is no less ardent than yours, though education and habit may have given it a different turn. It glows with equal zeal to attain its end. Where there is much warmth, much enthusiasm, I suspect there is much danger. We had better never meet more, than meet to be miserable.

For heaven's sake, madam, do not torture me with so impossible a supposition !

You expect one kind of happiness, I another. Can they coalesce? You imagine you have a right to attend to your appetites, and pursue your pleasures. I hope to see my husband forgetting himself, or rather placing self-gratification in the pursuit of universal good, deaf to the calls of passion, willing to encounter adversity, reproof,

proof, my death, the champion of truth, and the determined the unrelenting enemy of error.

I think, madam, I dare do all that can be required of me.

I know your courage is high. I know too that courage is one of the first and most essential qualities of mind. Yet perhaps I might and ought to doubt, nay to ask, whether you dare do many things.

What is it, madam, that I dare not do? Dare you receive a blow, or suffer yourself falsely to be called liar, or coward, without seeking revenge, or what honour calls satisfaction? Dare you think the servant that cleans your shoes is your equal, unless not so wise or good a man: and your superior, if wiser and better?—Dare you suppose mind has no sex, and that woman is not by nature the inferior of man?—

Madam—
Nay, nay, no compliments; I will not be interrupted.—Dare you think that riches, rank, and power, are usurpations;
and

and that wisdom and virtue only can claim distinction? Dare you make it the business of your whole life to overturn these prejudices, and to promote among mankind that spirit of universal benevolence which shall render them all equals, all brothers, all stripped of their artificial and false wants, all participating the labour requisite to produce the necessaries of life, and all combining in one universal effort of mind, for the progress of knowledge, the destruction of error, and the spreading of eternal truth?

There is such energy, madam, in all you say, that, while I listen to you, I dare do any thing, dare promise any thing.

Nay, but the daring of which I speak, must be the energy of your own mind, not of mine.

Do not distress yourself and me with doubts, madam. I have heard you yourself say that truth ultimately must prevail. I may differ with you in some points; but I am willing to hear, willing to discuss; and

and, if truth be on your side, there can be no danger.

The only danger is in the feeble or false colouring which the defenders of truth may give it, and not in truth itself.

I am too well convinced of your power to feel your doubts. You oblige me to see with your eyes, hear with your ears, believe what you believe, and reject what you think incredible. I am and must be whatever you please to make me. You have but to prescribe your own conditions.

Prescribe I must not. If I can persuade, if I can win upon your mind—

If—! You won my whole soul the very first moment I saw you! Not a word or action of mine but what has proclaimed the burning impatience of my passion!

True: the burning impatience—Your eagerness to assent will not suffer you to examine. Your opinions and principles are those which the world most highly approves, and applauds: mine are what it daily calls extravagant, impracticable, and absurd.

absurd. It would be weak in me to expect you should implicitly receive remote truths, so contradictory to this general practice, till you have first deeply considered them. I ask no such miracle. But if I can but turn your mind to such considerations, if I can but convince you how inestimable they are, even to yourself as well as to the world at large, I shall then have effected my purpose.

Of that, madam, be sure—You shall see!—Upon my honour, you shall!—I will order a fur-cap, a long gown, a white wand, and a pair of sandals this very day! No Grecian ever looked more grave than I will! Nay, if you desire it, razor shall never touch my chin more.

Well, well; equip yourself speedily, and I will provide you with a wooden dish, a lanthorn, and a tub.

But then, having made your conditions, you now grant me your consent?

That is obliging me once more to put on my serious face—The danger in which I so lately saw you hangs heavily on my mind;

mind; that and the warm passions by which it was occasioned.

And my excess of ardour, to demonstrate my love, you regard as a proof of my having none.

How passion overshoots itself! Your conclusion is as precipitate as was your proof.

I cannot be cool, madam, on this subject. I wonder to see you so! Did affection throb and burn in your bosom, as it does in mine, I am persuaded it would be otherwise.

We are neither of us so entirely satisfied with each other as we ought to be, to induce either me to consent or you to apply to Sir Arthur.

For heaven's sake, madam—

Hear me patiently, for a moment.—Previous to this conversation, I was convinced of the folly and danger of excessive haste. Should you imagine I have any self-complacency or caprice to gratify, by delay, you will do me great injustice: I solemnly protest I have none. My own
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interest, had I no better motive, would make me avoid such conduct. The inconsistencies and vain antics of the girl, which are justly enough stigmatized by the epithets flirting and coquetry, are repaid tenfold upon the wife. I would deal openly, honestly, and generously; but not rashly. I have every predilection in your favour which you could wish; such doubts excepted as I have declared. But I must not give either you or the world cause to accuse me of levity. My consent to speak to Sir Arthur would be generally understood as a pledge to proceed; not it is true by me, if I saw just cause to retract: but, though I earnestly desire to reform, I almost as earnestly wish not unnecessarily to offend the prejudices of mankind.

Nay let me beg, let me conjure you—
[He took both my hands with great ardour.]

And let me beg too, let me conjure you, not to think meanly or unkindly of me, when I tell you that I must insist on a short delay.

I will kneel! I will do any thing—!

Do

Do nothing which your heart does not approve; it never can be the way to forward any worthy suit. For my part, I must tell you, which you may reckon among my faults, that when I have once considered a subject, I am a very positive and determined girl. This may be thought obstinacy; but such I am, and such therefore you ought to see me.

And when, madam, may I now presume to hope?

Do not speak as if you were displeased.

Indeed it is far from my intention to offend.

You are too well acquainted, madam, with your own power of pleasing, to fear giving offence.

Far the contrary, for I fear it at this moment.

You are kind and killing both in a breath.—Be doubly kind, and suffer me immediately to speak to Sir Arthur.

I told you I am fixed, and I assure you it is true.

When then may I hope?

I could have wished to have seen my friend, your sister, first: but perhaps Sir Arthur may make some stay in London, and I should be sorry to delay a moment longer than seems absolutely necessary.— Let us both consider what has passed this morning, and provided no new accident should intervene—

Another leap from a rock?

Provided our approbation and esteem for each other should continue, and increase, I will ask for no further delay, after we come to London.

Well, well. It is the poor lover's duty to thank his mistress for the greatness of her condescension, even when he thinks she uses him unkindly.

I was going to reply, but my enterprising gentleman— [Indeed, Louisa, your brother is a bold youth]—snatched an unexpected embrace, with more eagerness than fear, and then fell on one knee, making such a piteous face for forgiveness, so whimsical, and indeed I may say witty, that it was impossible to be serious.—

However I hurried away, and thus the conference ended.

And now, after reviewing what has passed, tell me, Louisa, ought I to recede? Are not my hopes well founded? Must not the reiteration of truth make its due impression, upon a mind like Clifton's? Can it fail? Is he not the man who, for all the reasons formerly given, truly merits preference?

I must not forget to tell you that Frank readily complied with your request, and Clifton has seen the letters. He seems oppressed, as it were, with a sense of obligation to Frank; which the latter endeavours to convince him is wrong. Reciprocal duties, he says, always must exist among mankind; but as for obligations, further than those, there are none. A grateful man is either a weak or a proud man, and ingratitude cannot exist; unless by ingratitude injustice be meant. Frank's opinions appear to Clifton to be equally novel with mine; and must be well

understood, to escape being treated with mockery.

It is infinitely pleasing to me to perceive the fortitude with which Frank resists inclination. He is almost as chearful, and quite as communicative, and desirous of making all around him happy, as ever.— His constancy, however, is not to be shaken, in one particular. I could wish it were! It pains me to recollect that he will *persist, to the end of time, in thinking me his, by right!*

I cannot proceed!

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER

LETTER LIV.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

Paris, Hotel de l'Université.

LAUGH at me if you will, Fairfax.—
Hoot! Hiss me off the stage! I am no longer worthy of the confraternity of honest, bold, free and successful fellows. I am dwindling into a whining, submissive, crouching, very humble, yes if you please, no thank you Madam, dangler! I have been to school! Have had my task set me! Must learn my lesson by rote, or there is a rod in pickle for me! Yes! I! That identical

tical Clifton; that bold, gay, spirited fellow, who has so often vaunted of and been admired for his daring! You may meet me with my satchel at my back; not with a shining, but a whindling, lackadaisy, green-sickness face; blubbering a month's sorrow, after having been flogged by my master, beaten by my chum, and dropped my plum cake in the kennel.

'Tis very true, and I cut a damned ridiculous figure! But I'll remember it. The time will come, or say my name is not Clifton.

Yet what am I to do? I am it for it, flounder how I will. Yes, yes! She has hooked me! She dangles me at the end of her line, up the stream and down the stream, fair water and foul, at her good pleasure! So be it. But I will not forget.

Then she has such a way of affronting, that curse me if she does not look as if she were doing me a favour: nay, and, while she is present, I myself actually think she is; and, if vexation did not come to my relief, I believe I should so continue to think.

think. She is the most extraordinary of all heaven's creatures: and, in despite of my railing, I cannot help declaring a most heavenly creature she is! Every body declares the same. I wish you could but see her; for a single moment, Fairfax; and, having gazed, could you but listen!—— Her very soul is music. Form, features, voice, all are harmony. Then were you to hear her sing, and play——

But why the devil does she treat me thus? It is something to which I am unaccustomed, and it does not sit easily upon me. If I tamely submit to it may I——! I lie, in my teeth! Submit I must, bounce how I will. I have no remedy——

She gives me the preference, 'tis true. But what sort of a preference?—Why a cold, scrutinizing, very considerative, all wisdom and no passion preference. I do not think there is, upon the face of the whole earth, so nauseous a thing as an over dose of wisdom; mixed up, according to the modern practice, with a quantum sufficit of virtue, and a large double handful

handful of the good of the whole. Yet this is the very dose she prescribes for me! Ay, and I must be obliged to swallow it too, let me make what wry faces I please, or my very prudent lady is not so deeply in love but she can recede! And shall I not note down this in my tablets?—

I was sufficiently piqued at the first delay. Why delay, when I offer? Would you have thought, Fairfax, I should have been so very ready with a tender of this my pleasant person, and my dear freedom? And could you moreover have thought it would have been so haughtily rejected?—No—Curse it! Let me do her justice, too. It is not haughtily. She puts as many smiles, and as much sweetness, and plausibility, into her refusal as heart could desire. But refusal it is, nevertheless.

I must be further just to her: I must own that I have acted like a lunatic—I am mad at the recollection!—

I told you of the young fellow—Frank Henley—Whom I talked of chastising. Curse on my petulance! He has doubly chastised

chastised me since ! He has had his full revenge ! And in such a generous, noble manner—I am ashamed of myself—He has saved my life, and damn me if I do not feel as if I could never forgive him. There was an end of me and my passions. What business had he to interfere ?—He did it too in such an extraordinary style ! He appears to have risked more, laboured more, performed more for me than man almost ever did for his dearest and sworn friend.

Mine was an act of such ridiculous phrensy, that I am half ashamed to tell what it was. I jumped headlong down a declivity, because I knew I was a good swimmer, into a lake ; but, like a block-head, never perceived that I should get stunned by the shelving of the rock, and consequently drowned. And for what, truly ? Why to prove to a vapouring, crack-brained French Count, that he was a coward ; because perhaps he had not learned to swim ! When I look back I have absolutely no patience with myself !—

And then this generous Frank Henley !

After

—After a still more seemingly desperate leap than mine, and bringing me out of the water, dead as a door nail, two hours did he incessantly labour to restore me to life ! I, who a few hours before had struck him ! And here do I live to relate all this !

I think I could have forgiven him any thing sooner than this triumph over me. Yet he claims and forces my admiration. I must own he is a dauntless fellow—Yes, he has a heart—— ! Damn him ! I could kiss him one minute and kill him the next !

He has been the hero of the women ever since. But they are safe enough, for him. He has principles ! He is a man of virtue, forsooth ! He is not the naughty cat that steals the cream ! Let him be virtuous. Let him lave in his own imaginary waters of purity ; but do not let him offend others, every moment, by jumping out and calling—“ Here ! Look at me ! How white and spotless I am ! ”

As I tell you, the women are bewitched to him ; are all in love with him ! My sister, Louisa, does not scruple to tell him so,
in

in her letter! But she is one of these high-flyers. Nor can I for the soul of me persuade myself that, family pride excepted, she—ay, she herself, my she, would not prefer him to me. But these gentry are all so intolerably prudent that, talk to them of passions, and they answer they must not have any. Oh, no! They are above such mundane weakness!

As for him, he sits in as much stern state as the Old Red Lion of Brentford. Yes, he is my Lord Chief Justice Nevergrin! He cannot qualify, he! He is prime tinker to Madam Virtue, and carries no softening epithets in his budget. Folly is folly, and vice vice in his Good Friday vocabulary——Titles too are gilt gingerbread, Dutch dolls, punch's puppet-show. A duke or a scavenger with him are exactly the same—Saving and excepting the afore-said exceptions, of wisdom, virtue, and the good of the whole!

Did you never observe, Fairfax, how these fellows of obscure birth labour to
pull

pull down rank, and reduce all to their own level?

Not but it is cursed provoking to be obliged to own that a title is no sufficient passport for so much as common sense. I sincerely think there is not so foolish a fellow in the three kingdoms, as the noble blockhead to whom I have the honour to be related, Lord Evelyn: and, while I have tickled my fancy with the recollection of my own high descent, curse me if I have not blushed to acknowledge him, who is the head and representative of the race, as my kinsman! I own however he has been of some service to me in the present affair; for by his medium I have been introduced to the uncle of my deity, Lord Fitz-Allen, who has considerable influence in the family, and the very essence of whose character is pride. He is proud of himself, proud of his family, proud of his titles, proud of his gout, proud of his cat, proud of whatever can be called *his*; by which appellation in his opinion his very coach-horses are dignified. I happen to
please

please him, not by any qualities of mind or person, of which he is tolerably insensible, but because there is a possibility that I may one day be a peer of the realm, if my booby relations will but be so indulgent as to die fast enough.

Once more to the catechumenical inspectors of morality, these self-appointed overseers of the conscience.

I do not deny that there is some, nay much truth in the doctrines they preach to me. But I hate preaching! I have not time to be wisdom crammed. What concern is it of mine? What have I to do with the world, be it wrong or right, wise or foolish? Let it laugh or cry, kiss or curse, as it pleases! Like the Irishman in the sinking ship, " 'Tis nothing to me, I am but a passenger."

But, notwithstanding these airs, I have my lesson set me. Ay, and I must con it too; must say it off by rote; no parrot better!

There is no resisting one's destiny; and to be her slave is preferable to reigning
over

over worlds! You have, for you can have, no conception of her and her omnipotence! She is so unlike every other woman on earth! I wonder while I hear her, am attentive, nay, am convinced! What is most strange, though the divinest creature that ever the hand of Heaven fashioned, the moment she begins to speak you forget that she is beautiful!

But she should not hesitate, when I offer. No—She should beware of that! At least to any other woman the world contains, it would have been dangerous; and I am not sure that even she is safe.

However, I must learn to parse my lesson, for the present, and be quiet. Yes, yes; she shall find me very complaisant. I must be so, for live without her I cannot. She must, she shall be mine. It is a prize which I am born to bear away from all competitors. This is what flatters and consoles me.

You, Fairfax, think yourself more in luck. You continue to range at large. You scorn to wear the chain to-day which
you

you cannot shake off laughingly to-morrow—Well I envy you not——When you see her, if you do not envy me may I be impaled and left to roast in the sun, a banquet for the crows.

Good night.

C. CLIFTON.

END OF VOL. II.

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